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Toward Doing Justice in Christian Missions

HOWARD J. HABEGGER

Justice and its relationship to Christian world missions is one of the most discussed subjects in missiological circles. While injustice is operative in every society, Christian missionaries live and work in contexts where the issue is keenly seen and felt. The justice question has taken on new urgency for mission boards, missionaries, and members of national churches.

Christians cannot escape the claims of the Scriptures which speak directly to the issue of justice in two basic faith affirmations. In the Old Testament, Israel declared, "Yahweh is God." In the New Testament the fundamental confession of faith was, "Jesus Christ is Lord." Such affirmations are a direct challenge to worldly principalities and powers. These confessions of faith in God as the sovereign and supreme Lord of life and history speak to the personal, social, and political realms of life.

Concerning the relationship between the church's earliest confession and the theme of justice, John H. Yoder says, "That Christ is Lord, a proclamation to which only individuals can respond, is nonetheless a social, political, **structural** fact which constitutes a challenge to the Powers (1972:161). That Jesus is Lord is a prior claim for Christians which supersedes all other loyalties. Such a claim, understood in biblical perspective, is both personal and political in nature. Faithful witness to the gospel of Christ's Lordship means a deep concern for and commitment to justice.

Christian missionaries have been on the forefront of evangelism, social services, and development for decades. The role of the missionary in doing justice and witnessing against injustice now needs serious consideration. This will not be an easy task for most Mennonite missionaries who consider themselves evangelical in faith and stance. Concerned that the evangelical missionary community does not negate its witness for Jesus Christ, Vernon Grounds openly admits to failure on justice issues. He indicates that many evangelicals tend *to propagate a version of Christianity which turns its back on the world, counsels resignation no matter how unjust the prevailing order of things may be, advocates submission to the edicts of whatever powers control a government, and consoles afflicted people with the assurance of "pie in the sky, by and by* (1969:6). A partial gospel propagated by the Christian missionary is a betrayal of the confession that Jesus Christ is Lord.

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Thesis, study limitations, definitions

The thesis of this paper is that a biblical understanding of the good news about Jesus Christ includes a deep commitment to justice; missionaries will seek justice in concrete situations as a legitimate part of Christian missions in the world. Missionaries live in situations in which they have opportunities to respond to the problems of injustice, oppression, poverty, and violence. It is essential that missionaries are aware of justice issues and alert to respond when and where there are possibilities to witness to the saving and liberating message of Jesus Christ.

Any person who attempts a brief treatment of the subject of justice and Christian missions can be accused of being simplistic and selective. I do not intend to engage in a comprehensive study of justice. The sheer quantity of material available on the subject makes an in-depth study impossible. This paper is not intended to be exhaustive; rather it suggests some of the issues which missiologists reflect on these days.

The word "justice" has diverse meanings. Doing justice in concrete human situations is the best way to understand its meaning, but for the sake of a basic understanding of justice in a Christian mission context, some definitions are necessary.

Biblical and theological categories—rather than legal or political definitions—are the framework in which justice is defined. C. Norman Kraus has worked to define a biblical concept of justice. According to Kraus, a number of synonyms for justice are used repeatedly in the Old and New Testaments. Expressions such as "the righteousness of God," "the peace of God," and "the salvation of God" are roughly synonymous for justice in the Bible (1978:9).

The Bible does not define justice abstractly, but deals with justice in terms of human relationships—between God and persons, and among people, groups, and nations. In all these relationships, God appears to be the embodiment of justice, righteousness, goodness, ethical living, morality, and holiness. Kraus concludes that "justice is that which creates or restores right personal relationships in community. Injustice is that which inhibits and destroys authentic community" (1978:9).

Right relationships and right conduct in the life of the community seem to be the main thrust of a biblical understanding of justice. As Samuel Escobar contends, "Justice is a concrete form of conduct in the midst of the Christian community, which by necessity will have repercussions in the midst of the wider community" (1972:17). This relational justice dare not be spiritualized to include only a vertical dimension, excluding the horizontal dimension of life.

Poverty and affluence. One of the greatest human tragedies of our time is the poverty/affluence syndrome. This is not new, but the gap between the rich and the poor has reached unprecedented proportions. Because the concepts of rich and poor are relative, some definition is needed. The rich are basically self-sufficient, whereas the poor are dependent. The rich possess resources and exert power while the poor have little or no material goods and are usually powerless.

By conservative estimates one half of the human family is poor by this definition. United Nations experts claim

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that 460 million people are permanently hungry. About twenty percent of the world controls and consumes the majority of the world's resources. The affluent consuming world is predominantly the white Western industrialized nations.

For decades missionaries have seen and lived in pockets of poverty in many countries of the Third World. They have repeatedly, through acts of compassion, made valiant attempts to feed the hungry, clothe the naked, and heal the sick. However, only in recent times have poverty and affluence been understood in a new light. As Escobar points out, evangelicals in general have found it difficult to "accept the idea that poverty is caused by injustice, that the poverty of missions could be directly linked to the existence of a system that is basically unjust (1978:59). Today many authorities agree that poverty is often caused by the affluent lifestyle of people in Western nations.

Santa Ana, a Uruguayan theologian, believes that Christians must look at the deeper causes of poverty and affluence: *Today the problem of the challenge posed by the poor cannot be faced solely by alleviating the consequences of poverty. . . . We must also attack the causes of the evil. This implies the attempt to transform structures which institutionalize oppression* (1977:101). Christian missionaries are in a position to stand with and minister to the poor and, perhaps more important, they can speak a clear word to the affluent in the sending churches.

Personal rights. Because of the existence of systemic evil, the personal (human) rights of powerless individuals and ethnic groups are abused. Political regimes of all kinds often violate their citizens' basic personal rights. This is justified by appeal to the need for national security, martial law, or national defense. Violation of basic personal rights results when powerful structural forces create an atmosphere of suspicion and fear.

Some of the rights most often attacked in the mission context include the right of free propagation of the gospel, the right to criticize the government in power, the right to religious conversion, the right to live peaceably as a religious minority, and the right to travel freely within the country and outside it. Wherever religious rights are violated, political and economic rights will be suppressed as well.

The protection of personal rights of Christians and non-Christians alike is a Christian responsibility. When human beings are oppressed, harassed, tortured, and threatened, the Christian must attempt to protest or intervene. Eugene Stockwell, in a recent address, declared: *The violation of human rights . . . is not simply the result of perverse actions by evil men and women. There are structural forces at work . . . which directly or indirectly contribute to human defilement. To uncover, expose, analyze, and attack these structures is a Christian responsibility* (1979:59). Neither missionaries nor national Christians should forget that the protection of personal rights in whatever sociopolitical situation finds its justification in the nature of the gospel.

While many other social, economic, and political ills prevail in today's world, these are among those most keenly felt by the missionary community. Those involved in Christian missions need a new awareness of these corporate evils. They should have no doubt that a concern for justice is part of the Christian gospel. Christ came to confront the principalities and powers and to offer his forgiving and liberating love. The missionary message must contain this aspect of justice so people can live in peace with all humankind.

Issues in doing justice

Before suggestions can be offered for doing justice in Christian missions, one needs an awareness of the debate which surrounds this issue.

Polarization/priority question

When people discuss justice and missions, controversy emerges. The conversation tends to polarize the missionary community and raises questions about whether doing justice is a priority in Christian missions.

Many missionaries believe they can remain apolitical in their ministry. Much missionary thinking holds that the work of missions revolves solely around personal evangelism accompanied by acts of compassion (social services) and various forms of development. Much mission theology and strategy suggests that an inner spiritual transformation of the individual automatically leads to social change.

That evangelism must remain at the core of Christian missions is essential. Acts of compassion motivated by God's love are a vital part of missions. Programs of development must continue to be an important aspect of missions. But the missionary task must also include a deep concern for and involvement in doing justice in the name of Jesus Christ. Why must this be a priority in our missionary task? Because a direct relationship exists between authentic proclamation of the gospel and God's call for justice.

James Juhnke, writer of the history of General Conference Mennonite Church overseas missions, reflects on the way early Mennonite missionaries to the American Indians did acts of justice: "These early missionaries had a more holistic agenda than their children and grandchildren would have (1979:10). He further states that "in general the missionary practice was more holistic than the missionary theology" (1979:94). Christian missions today need a new sense of wholeness in doing evangelism, social services, development, and justice. All are important dimensions of proclaiming the good news. Biblically, evangelism and justice must not be seen in dichotomy but as an interrelated whole.

Problem areas

The enormous problems facing the world community stagger the imagination. The magnitude of global problems are described well by Gottfried Oosterwal. Addressing the Council of International Ministries (Mennonite mission and service administrators) in May 1979, he declared that by the year 2000 the world would have: *a population of 6.7-7 billion people, 80 percent of whom are non-Christians; a "global village" plagued by the most severe crisis of all human crises: megafamines; extreme poverty; great shortages of energy and resources; international monetary collapse; greatly limited personal freedom; strong dictatorial (governmental) control; a deep chasm between the rich countries and the poor; a city-civilization, dominated by science and technology, with their dehumanizing effects on all of life*

(automation, pollution, computerization, abortion on demand, genetic control); unrest, instability, violence, and revolutions; a gap between generations and a chasm between classes of people; a breakdown of the nuclear family; and an unstable social order, characterized by pluralism and experimentation. (1979:27).

One cannot adequately address the whole range of problems Oosterwal suggested, although each one has a ring of urgency. The scope of this paper limits us to three areas which affect Christian missions: political systems, poverty and affluence, and personal (human) rights.

Political Systems. Political systems are part of the structure of nation states. While these systems are not evil *per se,* they tend to become oppressive, exploitive, and corrupt. Missionaries in foreign countries live under political systems which are often dictatorial and repressive. These regimes have great power.

Missionaries have often tried to ignore political systems, learning to live with them as irritating but necessary. Since missionaries are foreigners they have attempted to stay away from any involvement in or confrontation with the political process. But John A. Lapp reminded those who attended a missionary retreat in 1976 that "missions and missionaries neither theologically nor historically can avoid the political process" (1976:9).

Sin in the political realm is just as evil as personal sins and often affects more people. When human dignity is destroyed, when sectors of society are suppressed, when freedom of worship is threatened, when the poor are exploited by corrupt political systems, the voice of justice must be heard. Even a person with conservative theology, such as Stanley Mooneyham, recognizes the inherent evil of political systems. He wrote: *At the heart of the problem . . . are human systems which ignore, mistreat and exploit man made in the image of God. If humanity is to be served, if the hungry are to be fed, if the poor are to share in God's bestowed abundance, some of the systems will require drastic adjustments while others will have to be scrapped altogether* (1975:117).

Missionaries should be conscious of political systems and aware of the ways in which innocent people are exploited. Missionaries can no longer ignore political evils.

Options for doing justice

Christians aware of contemporary justice issues are seeking ways to respond. Doing justice is difficult due to complex situations in which a variety of responses might be appropriate. Jesus was confronted with four options during his ministry and mission.

1. Revolutionist option

One way Jesus could have dealt with injustice, oppression, and corporate evil was the Zealot option. The Zealots were the revolutionaries of Jesus' time. They advocated the overthrow of the Roman oppressors by any means. The revolutionary option is considered as the model for doing justice in some Christian circles today. "Christian" revolutionaries are convinced that the principalities and powers which oppress people and nations are so evil that nothing less than radical revolution can bring about justice and change. They view Jesus as a revolutionary figure, and they attempt to tie him to the Zealot movement.

The revolutionist option has gained strong support from a growing group of Latin American theologians. Those adhering to a "theology of liberation" base their methodology for revolutionary change on theological assumptions drawn from the Old Testament Exodus experience and from the kingdom of God theme in the New Testament. Liberation theology divides society into two camps—the oppressed and the oppressors, or the exploited and the exploiters. The aim of liberation theology is to free the oppressed and exploited by means of revolutionary action which may involve the overthrow of governments, guerrilla resistance, and freedom fighting.

Because liberation theologians take seriously the concrete sociopolitical and economic injustices perpetrated on society, they conceive of salvation in terms of total liberation from all unjust structures and the creation of a new person in a new society. John Driver states that "Liberation Theology understands salvation in terms of socioeconomic liberation and the historic experience of the Exodus in the life of the people of God becomes the paradigm for the political liberation of all men in all times" (Escobar 1978:92).

Liberation theology cannot be fairly considered in such cursory fashion. Liberation theologians deserve credit for arousing the consciousness of Christians to injustice, insisting on the need to keep theology and *praxis* together, and stressing concern that Christian faith move beyond the spiritual into the real life of the people. While liberation theology should be studied carefully, one of its greatest weaknesses is that it follows a pattern for liberation not followed by Jesus Christ. Many theologians and missiologists, including Lesslie Newbigin, cannot accept the linkage between Jesus and the Zealot movement: *Some theologians have tried to make the connection by making Jesus into a political revolutionary. Elaborate efforts have been made to prove that Jesus was really part of the Zealot movement—the "freedom fighters" of his time . . . Careful scholarship cannot corroborate the claim that Jesus identified himself with the Zealot movement* (1978:110).

Not all people who support liberation theology should be categorized as modern-day Zealots. Some who are sympathetic to aspects of liberation theology would not advocate violent revolution. At the same time, within the core of this option are those who justify "just war" against the oppressors and exploiters. This is why Walbert Bühlmann, a Roman Catholic missiologist and scholar, reacts so strongly against the revolutionist option when he writes: *If we search the gospels, we find it as clear as day that Christians are called to be witnesses of the risen Christ and not agents of revolution. With the best will in the world it is not possible to distill from the gospel one drop of violent revolution. The revolutionary finds no explicit justification in the gospel* (1977:115). Jesus did not join or support the Zealot movement in his day, nor should Christians today accept the revolutionist option.

2. Collaborationist option

A second option Jesus faced was that of the Pharisees and Sadducees. While recognizing differences between these two religious groups, they nonetheless can be considered collaborationists. Both disliked the Roman oppressors but found it expedient to make adjustments and accommodations to the powers of Rome. Neither

group supported violent rebellion.

The gospel accounts are replete with incident after incident of Jesus opposing the duplicity of the Pharisees and Sadducees. He exposed their religious and political compromise. The Law teaches repeatedly that one should do justice, perform acts of mercy, and live justly with all people. Jesus' most severe judgments were reserved for these religious leaders who adapted and compromised instead of doing justice.

John H. Yoder makes a penetrating comment on the collaborationist option as it related to Jesus and the Sadducees: "Any alliance with the Sadducean establishment in the exercise of **conservative** social responsibility (which most Christians choose the rest of the time) was likewise excluded at the outset" (1972 :98). The collaborationist option seeks only marginal domestic reforms which are inadequate to meet the demands of God's justice.

3. Escapist option

The struggle against injustice and the oppressive tactics of the Romans in Jesus' day led a group known as the Essenes to withdraw from society. The Essenes escaped to the desert and the caves to meditate, pray, read, and copy the Scriptures. Throughout church history some Christians have sat on pillars, sought refuge in monasteries, and lived in small communities where the world was shut out of sight.

Throughout mission history, some movements—Catholic and Protestant—have encouraged people to withdraw from the evils of society. These Christians cannot live in the real world. Their answer to this evil world is to escape from it.

Christian escapism comes in many forms within the church and missionary community. One form is a type of theological withdrawal visible in dispensationalist pessimism. People of dispensationalist persuasion work for the salvation of souls and encourage a total break with the world. Another form of escapism is the formation of communities which tend to live unto themselves with as little reference or relationship to the outside world as possible. Missionaries developed compounds and a compound mentality. This "cloistered" existence attempted to preserve the faith in an environment foreign to Christian converts.

Jim Wallis, who lives in a small Christian community, issues a warning that such communities should not be used as places to escape Christian responsibility: *There is legitimacy to the charge that, for some groups of Christians, community has been an occasion for withdrawal from the world, a means of escaping the responsibilities of Christian witness and action in the world. . . . God's purpose in gathering a people together into community is that they might be the vessels and vanguard of his liberating and healing activity in history. Christian community must never withdraw from the world, but, on the contrary, is intended to be the very means of the church's engagement with the world, the basis and source of all Christian involvement* (1976:138-39).

The clear command of Jesus to "be in the world but not of the world" shows the tension in which Christians must live. Missionaries must avoid the temptation to practice the escapist option. Escapism was not the way of Jesus who identified himself in relation to the world. The escapist option is not for God's missionary community.

4. Nonviolent resistance option

Jesus practiced a fourth option—that of nonviolent resistance. Nonviolent resistance differs from the classical understanding of Christian pacifism. Often pacifism has been equated with being passive or with quietism. Pacifism or nonresistance as lived out by many Mennonites often means capitulation to the powers, no matter how evil they are. This type of pacifism approaches escapism which avoids all social responsibility.

Nonviolent resistance is an active stance which incorporates direct confrontation, active goodwill toward the "enemy," and clear judgments on sin and evil doing. All acts of violence are rejected because, as Sider states, "The way of violence dehumanizes and finally destroys those who are oppressing, nonviolent resistance affirms their integrity and humanity and calls them to decision" (1977:19).

This option centers in the cross of Christ as the supreme sign of suffering servanthood. In the community of believers, the church, this option represents the reality of Christ's presence in the world. Any act of justice begins with the church community. Driver puts it this way: The difference between the orientation of these groups and others "consists of the way in which they begin with the church (congregation) as the primary community in which God's justice is concretely realized" (Escobar 1978:101).

Attempts to do justice which rely on nonviolent resistance attend as much to means as to ends. The method of resisting evil and doing justice is Christian love. In support of this idea, C. Norman Kraus states, "Thus love becomes not only the motivation and control for social and political action, but it is also the criterion and ethical norm for evaluating any strategy or system of justice" (1978:7). Such love means that those committed to a specific act of justice do not love the oppressed and hate the oppressor.

Nonviolent resistance recognizes the legitimate use of power. Power is not evil *per se,* but is part of God's creative activity. Sider insists that power "can and should be used by Christians in loving nonviolent ways in the search for justice" (1979:55). Those who adopt this option can exert power in various forms, provided they respect the other person's freedom to respond with either a "yes" or "no."

The life and acts of Jesus clearly point in the direction of nonviolent resistance as the option Christians should use in preaching the gospel of the kingdom, performing acts of mercy and compassion, confronting the evil powers, and calling for righteousness and justice.

Suggestions for doing justice

Perhaps the most difficult aspect of this paper is giving some suggestions to missionaries on concrete ways in which they can do justice. At least two factors must be recognized. First, every situation in which a missionary might take some action or speak some word is different. To prescribe in advance what should be done is unwise. A person must be led by the Holy Spirit, an informed conscience, and a commitment to Christian principles. Second, missionaries should never act without consultation with the local community of believers—the national

church. They must express their concern and suggest a possible course of action to church leaders. Even if missionaries decide on personal responses to issues of injustice, they should always confer with the church community and be prepared to give and receive counsel.

Personal action

Consultation with the church community does not mean that a Christian missionary cannot become involved in a personal way. People ask the question: By what right can missionaries living in a foreign country become involved personally in some justice issue? The answer should include at least these responses: (1) Christian missionaries are always to speak the word of love and justice as an integral part of the gospel message. (2) Missionaries are guests not only of a particular government but of the people of that country. Identification with the **people** may put the missionary in conflict with the political powers. (3) In any concern for the role of the church in society, the national Christians and missionaries will search together in obedience to Jesus Christ. (4) A foreign missionary can often see as an outsider what insiders cannot see because of social and cultural conditioning. In brief, "missionaries cannot disassociate themselves from their [national brothers and sisters'] sufferings merely on the grounds that they hold a foreign passport" (DOM 1976:3). Here are some considerations for doing justice.

Biblical reflection. Doing justice begins with understanding the Bible. The way God dealt with people and nations in the Old Testament and the life and deeds of Jesus Christ in the New Testament are the beginning places for serious theological reflection. Reflection on the meaning of the cross and Christ's sufferings will put a person in touch with the issues of justice in a new way. Sider warns of two traps which must be avoided in any study of the cross and its relationship to justice: *It is a tragedy of our time that many of those who appropriate the biblical understanding of Christ's vicarious cross fail to see its direct implications for the problem of war and violence. And it is equally tragic that some of those who most emphasize pacifism and nonviolence fail to ground it in Christ's vicarious atonement* (1979:34-35). A direct relationship exists between the way in which God acted in Jesus Christ on the cross and an understanding of justice. Doing justice does not begin with humanistic philosophy but rather with the biblical understanding of the teachings and acts of Jesus Christ.

Knowledge of situations. One needs not only biblical reflection but knowledge of the contemporary situation in which injustices occur. Missionaries need to be knowledgeable about the nature of power and the structures of society. This suggestion does not mean missionaries should abandon the normal missionary tasks. This is not a call for missionaries to become social, economic, or political experts. But missionaries should be reasonably informed and aware of current events in their country of service. A knowledgeable missionary is in a position to inform and communicate with the national church overseas and the sending church at home. Paul A. Hopkins, a Presbyterian mission administrator, calls missionaries to conscientization (awareness) of the present situation. He believes "that knowledge will become so important that they will find ways to communicate it to those with whom they speak, because they see the source of the problem in a new way" (1977:114).

Identification in lifestyle. Most missionaries have struggled with their style of life in the face of poverty in many Third World societies. Identification in lifestyle is an important concept but difficult to live out overseas. Perhaps the most powerful way to show concern for justice consists of identifying with people more than making pronouncements. Escobar, speaking to this point, says, "No missionary is a true missionary if he does not live and announce the gospel in a way that makes clear that he does not worship Mammon or Caesar" (1978:82).

Identification is also a matter of attitude. A missionary's attitude toward suffering, the poor, and the oppressed with be quickly communicated to the people. "Standing with" and "sitting beside" are necessary parts of identification. If a missionary's lifestyle is a barrier to fellowship and does not express a solidarity with the people, it should be altered. A missionary lifestyle is not so much a matter of personal preference as of determining how best to live and communicate the good news in light of people's hurts, poverty, and struggles.

Interference in the system. Sometimes missionaries may need to interfere in the system for the cause of justice. Missionaries have a history of opposing evil systems: footbinding, infanticide, cruel forms of punishment, oppression of women. In great moments missionaries have confronted evil powers and unjust structures in the name of God. Missionaries interfere in order to break the power of an evil system and to uphold God's righteousness and justice.

While the Christian message has pastoral elements, at times it must also possess a prophetic ring. Escobar insists that "if the message of the missionary has elements that foster a passive acceptance of the existing order or a total refusal to deal with it critically, his presence is interpreted as active cooperation with the perpetuation of the system" (1978:76). Missionaries must choose their moments and methods of interference carefully and decide whether response should be a pastoral or prophetic word or act.

Attempting to do justice as a Christian is not an easy task in any situation. Many factors need to be considered under the guidance of the Holy Spirit. Grounds encourages all Christians committed to justice with these words: *The imitation of Jesus Christ, Calvary-inspired and Spirit-enabled, means a life of service and sacrifice, a life of sensitive caring, a life of identification with the oppressed and disinherited and needy, a life of constructive revolution against any political and religious* status quo *which in the name of God is frustrating the will of God* (1969:20).

Corporate action

Sometimes a missionary can take personal action, but more likely the church speaking and acting corporately will make a greater impact. Generally, missionaries will more effectively take a low profile in justice issues. The local body of believers is always the primary group where discussion and a decision for corporate action are focused.

Church as a presence. The presence of the church in society is a powerful sign of the kingdom of God. Any action which may be taken against injustice has as its base the church as a community of committed believers. Emilio Castro reminds Christians of the importance of the body as

the base for witness in the world when he says: "It is absolutely essential that we never lose sight of our commitment to the Christian community as a whole and to the deepest roots of our faith" (1978:95).

Wherever the people of God live in peace and harmony as Christ's visible body, the influence for goodness, righteousness, and justice counterbalances the forces of sin and evil in society. George Todd captures the power of the church as a presence when he writes: *As the Church is present . . . where people are suffering, where brokenness, alienation, sickness, despair, poverty, and death prevail, the crucified and resurrected Lord makes himself known through his church in healing, reconciling, and health-giving action* (1976:258).

Church as a witness. The corporate witness of the church is a vital aspect of the proclamation of the gospel. Such witness has positive and negative elements. Christ's church in any place is called to give positive witness to the forgiving, liberating power of Jesus Christ in every realm of life. That witness includes a personal commitment to Christ and to the community of Christian believers. The way Christians live and act as members of the church is a powerful testimony for the cause of justice. Christian witness is always **for** love, peace, justice, and righteousness.

The church is also called to witness **against** evil; it must not allow itself to be seduced by the principalities and powers. These principalities and powers include invisible spiritual forces and visible sociopolitical structures which are demonic. Lapp declares that *a major task of the church is to concentrate on not being seduced by the principalities and powers. This means among other things that we must not lend our hand of legitimation to either the old or new regimes. This is the very reason for separation of church and state so the church can express itself as an independent voice* (1976:9). Denouncing injustice is a legitimate witness of the church.

Church as a community. While the church should witness by word and deed, it is not called to become a political power. Joining political movements and forming political parties do not represent the kind of power the church should exercise. Wallis believes in active involvement but points out that "the Church's calling is not to become a power of the world exercising influence in the same way and by the same methods as the powers and institutions of the world's system" (1976:126).

The real power of the church lies primarily in the quality of life lived by its members. Driver makes a strong case for the power of the church visible in its ministry of reconciliation: *Only a community which has been liberated by Christ can denounce with authority the idolatrous bondage to social systems. Only a community of reconciliation can denounce with authority the strife of nationalism, racism, and classism. Only the community of openness and honesty can denounce with any degree of credibility the deceitful and vicious uses of propaganda from both right and left* (Escobar 1978:104).

The church as a presence, a witness, a community living out the claims of the gospel of Christ can make an impact in society for righteousness and justice. Christian missionaries, as part of the body of believers in an overseas context, are often in a position to encourage and assist the church to be God's agent for change. Sometimes the response may be personal, but more often justice is done through corporate response of the church community.

Cautions in doing justice

Several words of caution need to be mentioned in relation to doing justice in Christian missions. These admonitions are meant for all people involved in God's missionary task in today's world.

Avoid becoming paralyzed into inaction

All missionaries have sometimes experienced a sense of helplessness in the face of enormous problems. At times the forces of evil seem to overwhelm missionaries and they cry out, "What can we do?" Sometimes the answer which reverberates in the mind and spirit is, "Nothing!" The great temptation is to allow oneself to become paralyzed and passive.

Passivity can be overcome in two ways. First, despite the constant presence of evil in many forms, the Christian missionary holds an unshakeable faith in a sovereign God who is working in the world and who will write its final chapter. Oosterwal, who painted a bleak picture for the year 2000, also inspires hope and courage in those who engage in the struggle: *Finally, amid all these changes, challenges, new developments, and dynamics, the Lord is in control. If the challenges seem complex and the developments too bewildering, let our eyes remain on the Lord and His promise, "Lo I am with you, until the end of time." He is the Alpha and Omega of mission* (1979:30).

A second way to avoid paralysis is not to attempt the impossible. Any actions which the church or individual missionaries take on should be limited in scope and realizable. Ray Brubacher, Mennonite Central Commitee Africa Director, says, "Our strategy is not to take on all things at one time or to take on the 'big fish' projects; rather we prefer to take on a number of smaller efforts in which our involvement can make some impact" (1978:7).

Avoid taking a self-righteous stance

Some who witness against injustice develop attitudes of self-righteousness. Self-righteousness is often subtle. Every Christian must humbly confess limited knowledge of what it means to do justice. Self-righteous pronouncements or denouncements often lack compassion and are full of cliches and prejudices. We must remember that Jesus refused to categorize evildoers as enemies.

Those who feel led to take a prophetic or critical stance on some justice issue ought not stand in judgment of others who cannot take the same stance. All positions stand under the judgment of God. Pressure to force people into accepting a particular mode of action is not in keeping with the spirit of Jesus. Self-righteousness within the Christian community or in confronting the evildoer is also condemned by the Lord.

Avoid equating justice with political ideology

Christians representing various theological persuasions and political perspectives sometimes fall into the trap of equating justice with a particular sociopolitical ideology. Missionaries sometimes baptize a certain political ideology or system as "Christian." To place a quasi-

religious aura around any human system and to identify it as a sign of the kingdom is dangerous. While some political systems may be more just than others, missionaries must not sanction any ideology. Moral indignation against injustice can lead Christians to claim that their cause or movement is absolutely right. Escobar has excellent counsel for any person who equates justice with ideology: *We do not believe that one can apply the adjective "Christian" to any program in particular, nor do we believe that the simple association of evangelicals with one political party will automatically produce a better political system. . . . We must never make sacred any particular order, identifying it with the Kingdom of God. The warning is just as valid for the supporters of the status quo as for the supporters of the revolution* (1972:18-19).

Because most Western missionaries come from capitalistic countries, they tend to equate the free-enterprise system and democracy with being Christian. Other Christian thinkers and activists see Marxism or socialism as the answer to the world's problems. Equating any political ideology with God's justice is idolatrous.

Avoid basing hope on false idealism

Christian hope rests in the sovereignty and righteousness of God, not in false idealism which expects utopia on earth. Speaking and acting for justice, trying to change the system, and supporting the poor and oppressed should not lead Christians to believe they can establish a utopian social order. The missionary community in its work and witness should not believe its efforts will establish the kingdom of God in its fullness. Verkuyl comments that "it would be sheer pride and impertinence to imagine that **we** will establish the kingdom or bring it to completion. That is the work of God alone (1978:204).

The New Testament warns Christians against romantic illusions. Existing structures tend to be evil because human beings are infested with sin and self-interest. Individual conversion and change of heart does not automatically change the structures of injustice, nor does changing structures automatically convert the heart. Sin, evil, violence, and corruption are present realities. These problems can be reduced but not eliminated. This realization does not paralyze but keeps the missionary from false idealism.

The cautions are not meant to undermine the need for active involvement in doing justice. They should keep those engaged in Christian missions from adhering to visions which are unrealizable and impossible. God will usher in the ultimate day when righteousness, justice, and peace will reign over all peoples and all nations.

Justice as a mission priority

Christian missions have been engaged in evangelism, acts of compassion, and development in the belief that these are an integral part of the gospel message of a missionary church. This paper holds that mission boards, missionaries, and national Christians should add doing justice to the list of mission priorities. The Scriptures declare that doing justice is the will of God and a Christian responsibility.

Following the model of Jesus in the area of justice will not be easy. Powerful voices and movements will attempt to distract missionaries from exercising their convictions and consciences. Some will advocate paths which cannot be walked by Mennonite missionaries committed to nonviolence. Despite the dangers, missionaries have a role to play in doing justice.

Juhnke's mission history closes with these words of encouragement for those involved in missions: *The church is not a political establishment but a voluntary body of believers committed to obedience to Christ. Christians face the world as a prophetic minority rather than as a dominant majority. Essential to the missionary message is an emphasis on the costs of discipleship in a world which, on the whole, rejects salvation in Christ. Mennonites bear a heritage and speak a language which is particularly appropriate for the contemporary scene of Christian missions* (1979:215). We are committed to the message of salvation, to obey Christ and live a life of discipleship. This commitment must lead us toward doing justice in Christian missions.

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A Voice for the Voiceless

WILMA SHANK

In the fall of 1956, shortly after the beginning of our second five-year term with Mennonite Board of Missions in Brussels, Belgium, a telephone call from the Belgian Gospel Mission Bible School revealed the presence of an Italian Mennonite student in the city. David Shank was being solicited as supervisor for this student's practical work.

Mauro Sbolgi, we learned, was an ex-communist, baptized by Dr. Monti, then a radio speaker for the Italian Mennonite Broadcast in Florence, Italy. Mauro arrived in Belgium as a result of Virginia manufacturer Lewis Martin's vision and call to sponsor twelve people in the work of the kingdom. His assignment was to evangelize Italian miners, but the only way for any Italian to remain in Belgium at that time was as a coal miner or as a student. Going into the mines was hazardous; Mauro chose to become a student. His limited educational experience permitted him to enroll in the Bible school; while there, his practical work would be done among the Italian mining population.

The beginning approach to such a ministry was one of house-to-house contacts with literature distribution and personal testimony to the message of salvation. In this weekly ministry, Mauro soon learned that "foreigners" had urgent practical needs: finding adequate housing, getting work permits, and dealing with hostility from the host country's population. Italians had been brought in to do the "dirty work" while Belgians moved up the economic and social ladder. Mauro discovered that the migrant population needed translators as they dealt with authorities, enrolled their children in school, or required medical attention. People needed assistance in obtaining the indispensable identity card, mandatory for all citizens and residents of Belgium. The situations of many people called for a mediator; the voiceless had no spokesperson.

Over a period of many months, Mauro felt called to exchange his door-to-door strategy for an office where foreign migrant workers could come for help, counsel, and understanding. This type of ministry was much more genuine and effective; it reached people with their particular difficulties, and raised the inevitable question: "Why do you do this for us?" The answer—Mauro's motivation—was the good news, and this led ultimately to the creation of congregations.

Mauro did not have social work training, only the zeal and compassion of a new Christian; no financial support was available for a technically unqualified social worker.

A change in Belgian legislation because of a continuing inadequate labor supply resulted in more work permits for migrant workers coming also from Spain, Portugal,

Wilma Shank and her husband David currently serve with Mennonite Board of Missions in Ivory Coast. They served in Belgium from 1950-73.

Turkey, and North Africa. Mauro obtained a work permit for himself and went into a factory to earn his own living and to experience firsthand the life of the foreign workers. After his work hours he was available to migrant laborers who required assistance; his "office" was often open into the late hours of the night. He continued to encourage small congregations of Italian, Spanish, and Portuguese people.

A few years earlier, several Protestant pastors, along with a retired woman social worker, initiated a "Protestant Social Center." That ministry developed out of a concern to have competent persons who could sort out the people with real needs in the big city from those who were professional exploiters bleeding pastors for money. Numerous individuals who came for door-to-door handouts were from then on referred to the social services, and each case was dealt with individually. The Protestant Social Center became the extended helping hand of the Brussels Protestant churches. It found its moral and financial support in the local churches and their supporting constituencies. Mauro's personal work in Brussels was ultimately affiliated with this center and its roots.

Meanwhile the service to foreign workers that Mauro was giving on the side became so demanding that he was forced to give up his factory job. The building that housed the Protestant Social Center provided space for a Slavic church, the growing Spanish and Italian congregations, and also the headquarters of an official "Services for Foreign Laborers." In the early years, Mauro shepherded the Italian and Spanish congregations with regular teaching assistance from David Shank. Mauro's intense ministry to the foreign labor force pushed the Belgian Mennonite Council to recognize him as "Chaplain of Foreign Workers."

The time came when the Ministry of Labor intervened with a salary for this chaplaincy just as they had been doing for the Catholic ones. It became increasingly evident that migrant laborers in other places as well needed understanding mediators who could open doors for jobs, obtain work permits, and find economical housing. Because a number of people interceded in high places on behalf of those in need, a conscientizing process began. A coalition of university students, social and welfare agencies, and even sections of political parties, worked together in a nationwide effort to make Belgians conscious of the foreigners' right to respect and personal dignity. Whether in the Ministry of Labor or in the provincial governments or in the industrial cities of Liege, Charleroi, and Mons where Mauro set up extension posts for answering the needs of their foreign laborers, his presence symbolized compassion for the foreigners "within the gates."

Just as the government became more aware of its obligations to the foreign worker, so the churches felt called to support the ministry, social and spiritual, to the migrant labor population. The Federation of Protestant Churches became the coordinating agency for the nationwide ministry to foreign workers. The local area social services were made up of people from the churches and technicians whose compassion moved them to do something for that segment of the population which by itself was powerless to change its situation. Challenged by the vision of a few, the churches backed this cooperative mission of finding justice for those who were discriminated against because as outsiders they were ready to do the jobs at the bottom of the economic and social ladder.

During more than twenty years Mauro Sbolgi's personal call to aid these populations provided the advocacy necessary to find ears within the government ministries that helped interpret and change legislation in order to protect the foreign manual laborer. In the early 1970s the *Prix de Pere Pire,* a substantial financial award, and the *Service des Etrangers,* for outstanding work done for the migrant laborers, were given to Mauro Sbolgi. A continuing Spanish congregation and a two-directional mission in Christian community in Spain are direct outgrowths of such a pattern of ministry. Because of one man's compassion, persistent call, and intensive hard work, the voiceless found a voice.

The Cries of Creation

PERRY KEIDEL

I saw in a dream a forest of trees, proud trees, the glory of creation. Two people were viewing them.

"How awe-inspiring!" exclaimed the first.

"But look closely at the bark," said the other. "It is wounded. The wounds are seeping blood."

"If the bark is wounded and seeping blood as you say, it

Perry Keidel, now living in Corpus Christi, Texas, was reared in Zaire. Having closely followed the thought of Francis Schaeffer and other evangelical theologians, he concludes their rationalistic theology does not allow for a positive view of the created world.

is not the fault of the trees. Their beauty inspires one to praise!" responded the first.

"The trees bleed because they are cursed," grumbled the second. "It is a fact we simply have to live with."

The dream addresses the concept coined by some leading evangelicals as "abnormal universe," allegedly taught in Scripture. Many instructors of Scripture use creation's "fallenness" to reinforce the biblical doctrine of humankind's depravity. According to biblical teaching, how did the fall affect creation? Is disobedience to God so far-reaching as to dislocate the **entire** universe?

The presence of fallen humanity blights creation morally as areas of the earth's cosmos become battlegrounds of spiritual forces of good and evil (Dan 10; Eph 6:12). All human history has stained the ground by shedding human blood. The earth cried in protest at the spilt blood of Abel (Gen 4:10-11).

Humanity draws into its own ruin the creation over which Adam had been given mastery. Humans lost their initial headship and pre-fall glory (Heb 2:5-8). Succeeding generations stain the earth not only by crimes against each other, but by crimes against the environment. Nature becomes abnormal in those areas where it feels the curse of unbridled exploitation. The freedom of choice God granted people extends even to their destruction of their own environment. With careless greed they poison earth's rivers and ravage its land. Spacecraft clutters the earth's outer atmosphere and litter the moon.

But if the universe is abnormal, its abnormality is neither total nor substantive. I can't imagine that humans are so significant (as a Western attitude would hold) that the distant planet of Pluto or nebulae millions of light-years away were somehow shaken at the time the forbidden fruit was tasted (as the term "universe" implies). The term "abnormal" suggests that all of creation is now somehow "fallen," or "morally corrupt," or inherently evil. Such a position is consistent with neither reality nor the emphasis of Scripture.

Then what does Paul mean when he writes, "The whole creation has been groaning in travail"? Calvin draws an important distinction between the groans of creation (Rom 8:22) and those of humankind. Creation's groans are "pains of childbirth." Human groans are not birth pains, but pains of death.

The release from bondage for which nature patiently hopes (Is 11; Rom 8:19-22) is a release from its role as the medium of God's judgment since the fall of humankind: "Thorns and thistles it shall bring forth to you" (Gen 3:18; see also Job 36:27-37:13; 40:6-14). Nature suffered when its winds carried calamity and pestilence upon Pharoah. It bore the burden of an abnormally long drought when God through Elijah pronounced judgment upon the rule of King Ahab.

On one hand, creation is a medium for divine judgment; on the other, it reveals God's preservation to humanity (Job 12:7-10). In Romans 1:20, Paul says that creation so declares the power and divine nature of the Creator that those who reject its witness and refuse to glorify him stand without excuse. "The heavens are telling the glory of God" (Ps 19:1). How could nature adequately witness to this reality if it were also cursed and alienated from God? If it were corrupted, it would not be this positive witness but would only reinforce unredeemed humanity's sense of lostness and despair. But because nature is not corrupt, its order and beauty throw into sharp contrast the human condition of chaos and evil. This should cause people to fear and glorify their Creator.

The Psalmist laments his own corruption (51:5), but he in no way represents nature as rebelliously and violently set against itself and against God as is the human race. He gives not the slightest hint that nature is substantively abnormal. Quite the contrary, the Psalmist paints beautiful word pictures of God's harmonious communion with nature and its witness to his attributes. He sings that **the earth** testifies to **God's goodness** (33:5). Psalm 104 is a meditation on God's intimate involvement with nature, its preservation, and his rejoicing in it.

In Romans 5 Paul intimately connects the atonement with the fall of humankind. "Then as one man's trespass led to condemnation for all men, so one man's act of righteousness leads to acquittal and life for all men" (v. 18). The world engulfed by sin (v. 12) is not the universe but the kingdoms of fallen humankind. These are the same kingdoms Satan offered Christ in the wilderness. In Bible history these human kingdoms received God's moral judgment for their iniquity. Does Christ's commission to "preach the gospel to the whole creation" (Mk 16:15) literally mean that all creation (dogs, cats, trees) needs to hear? An absurd thought: stump-preaching to the stumps! Humanity, by its fall, lost communion and harmony with God and finds alienation under his curse and sentence of death. The last Adam came to redeem **humankind.**

When God saw all that he made, he pronounced it good. But nature alone has no initiative to warrant a **moral** sentence of good or evil. Nature is simply God's medium to reveal himself or to judge. Many use the female pronoun when referring to nature. But God, presently at work behind nature, gives it its apparent personality of benevolence or judgment. The animists are more correct than modern rationalists when they affirm the presence of evil spirits behind many supernatural or malicious phenomena of nature. Whether nature evokes curse or praise, it is not nature, but Evil, ourselves, or God that stands addressed.

Nature's groans are testimonies to Christ's return. In primitive areas nature's beauty speaks of the glory of God. Breathing city smog does not inspire me to worship the Creator. But when I climb into the mountains, the cool air, fragrant with pine and wildflower, is to me the sweet breath of God.

In Isaiah 34, God removes the present order in his judgment. Then "the skies [will] roll up like a scroll" (v. 4). A scroll only bears a message. After the message is given, the scroll is rolled up and put away. The Psalmist compares nature to clothing (102:25,26). Today we see God in the garments of his creation. When these are worn out, having fulfilled the divine purpose of covering the Holy One, he says they will be changed. Once this order has fulfilled its time, God will roll it up to replace it with an era where **only** beauty and harmony exist (Is 35).

Ours is a gospel of hope, not despair. Unnecessarily burdening creation with the fact of our fall is a bleak thing to do. Scripture's emphasis puts the guilt where it lies:

"For affliction does not come from the dust,
Neither does trouble sprout from the ground,
For man is born for trouble
As the sparks fly upward" (Job 5:6-7).

Chronicle

Council of International Ministries
November 27-28, 1979, Des Plaines, Illinois

The Council of International Ministries fall meeting began Tuesday morning, November 27, 1979, with a rousing—overwhelmingly male—rendition of "Lift your glad voices." CIM (formerly COMBS) meets twice a year; members are overseas administrators of thirteen North American Mennonite and Brethren in Christ mission boards, plus representatives of Mennonite Central Committee Peace Section, Mennonite Economic Development Associates, Mennonite Medical Association, and Overseas Mission Training Center. At this meeting another agency joined the Council: Evangelical Mennonite Mission Conference of Canada.

A substantial part of one afternoon was devoted to a study session on world economics—trends, developments, and prospects. Guest lecturer E. Wayne Nafziger, economics professor at Kansas State University, presented an assessment of the post World War 2 development record in developing countries, and talked about those nations' demands for a new international economic order.

Another special guest was Dr. Harold W. Turner of the Department of Religious Studies at the University of Aberdeen (Scotland), and expert on new religious movements in primal societies. Turner's research has led him to the conclusion that those movements grow out of the interaction—and power differential—between primal and universal religions, primal society and Western society. Out of this encounter a new mix develops. He groups these movements according to where they fit on a spectrum, the poles of which are primal religions (on the left) and universal religions — especially Christianity— (on the right).

Turner believes these movements, which involve numerous people on every continent, present Western Christianity with two challenges. One is **ecumenical:** Insofar as these groups are recognizably churches (like African Independent Churches), we should respond to their desire for fellowship and recognize them as part of the Christian family. To the extent that they are still close to primal religious roots, they also present a **missionary** challenge.

Other items on the agenda of the two-day meeting were

- discussion of a proposal for creation of a center for international development at Eastern Mennonite College;
- report by Paul N. Kraybill on current Mennonite involvement in Haiti, based on observations made during his recent trip there;
- reports by Marie Wiens and Edgar Stoesz on a recent Consultation on the Future of MCC in Europe;
- report by Donald R. Jacobs on the South African Christian Leadership Assembly held in Pretoria last summer;
- reports, agency by agency, on new program developments.

Two regularly constituted task forces met prior to the plenary sessions of the CIM. The Latin America Work Group heard from administrators who have been in Latin America recently and discussed the need for developing a center for the theological education in Central America and Upper South America. Jose Ortiz, Mennonite General Board Associate General Secretary for Latin Concerns, told the group about the Menno-Hispanic Ministries Program at Goshen College, inaugurated in September 1979. He also shared concerns about mission agency responsibility for training national leaders. Arnoldo Casas, Associate Secretary of Spanish Congregational Education and Literature at Mennonite Board of Congregational Ministries, presented a proposal for a curriculum development project to meet needs of Spanish-speaking Mennonites in North, Central, and South America. On the basis of the Work Group's recommendation, the CIM approved allocation of $11,000 in the CIM budget to assist with costs of a 1980 consultation to launch this venture.

The Asia Task Force meeting began with Paul N. Kraybill's report on projections for Asian Mennonite Conference, to be held June 1-5, 1980, in Osaka, Japan. Others shared information on theological education efforts in Asia: progress toward relocating Union Biblical Seminary (India), developments at the Anabaptist Study Center in Tokyo, projections for a peace and justice consultation involving evangelical church leaders in India.

Two other groups met in conjunction with the CIM meeting. An ad hoc group on China met most of the day, November 26, and agreed to constitute itself as an ongoing body. They are making arrangements for someone to assume leadership. The group discussed the results of a study process Hugh D. Sprunger and Atlee Beechy undertook which lists needs CIM agencies have perceived in relation to China: (1) a need to establish a means of listening to and evaluating what has happened and is happening in China and to Chinese people outside China; (2) a need to provide educational material to CIM church and organizational constituencies concerning China and Christian responsibility to China's people; (3) a need to coordinate any program initiatives proposed by constituent mission, service, or educational agencies. Sprunger and Beechy suggested steps for meeting these needs, and their report lists current sources of information on China, including literature, study centers, people.

Another meeting, partly under the auspices of Mennonite World Conference, was held Monday evening, November 26. It brought together people interested in

leadership training overseas to discuss a draft proposal for a theological education project. This document was prepared as a response to the concerns arising out of the Mennonite World Conference-sponsored Hesston Consultation on Mennonite World Mission (July 1978), which mandated "some provision for Anabaptist-oriented leadership training in all of the cultural areas of our constituent churches." The document, refined by the group in November, spells out objectives for such a project and outlines the steps to be taken in reaching them: (1) clarification of the meaning of theological education—by reconceiving the process, working to develop dynamic identity, redefining "curriculum" to include new pedagogical approaches; and (2) review and evaluation of present programs and needs. The document is being circulated in provisional form for further testing, especially with church leaders overseas.—Barbara Nelson

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12th Inter-Varsity Student Missions Convention
December 27-31, 1979, University of Illinois at Urbana
Theme: THAT ALL NATIONS MIGHT BELIEVE AND OBEY JESUS CHRIST.

More than 17,000 students attended the 12th IVCF Mission Convention at Urbana. Registration for this event was closed in October, denying participation to thousands of students who had also wished to attend. Attendance at all main sessions was excellent.

The purpose of the convention was stated in the information directory: "We hope you will meet the Lord Jesus Christ anew, learn new truth from Scripture, acquire improved understanding of the Church's mission and make new friends in the Body of Christ. Finally, we trust that as a result of Urbana 79 the Spirit of the Living God will strengthen you to better accomplish His mission for you on campus, or wherever He calls."

In order to achieve some of these objectives, the students were encouraged to participate in the scheduled activities and in the study of the book of Romans. Personal study and meditation focused on Romans 6-8, and a study guide had been prepared as an aid. The one-hour Bible exposition led by Dr. John R. W. Stott focused on Romans 1:1-5:11. The group Bible studies centered on Romans 12-15.

Church leaders Luis Palau, Gregorio Landero, Isabelo Magalit, Ronald G. Mitchell, David Adeney, and Billy Graham provided lectures. Workshops, led by a host of people with experience in Christian ministry, provided students with information to improve their understanding of the church's mission. Mennonite representatives Fremont Regier and Paul Hiebert conducted workshops. Sadly lacking were any discussion sessions led by Mennonite leaders.

One 45-minute session on Sunday afternoon provided opportunity for Mennonite students to catch a glimpse of one another and to hear Fremont Regier outline some of the "Distinctives of Anabaptist Missions." However, the time was too short for meaningful discussion or interaction.

All the Mennonite booths in one row provided both staff and students easy access to information on overseas service possibilities available under the "Menno Banner"; it also prompted some uneasy questions. An evaluation of this year's experience by the agencies involved will be helpful for future planning.

Although the issues of peace and justice surfaced occasionally, no serious consideration was given to these topics. Graham, in his speech Sunday night, reminded his listeners that there may be a priority but not a dichotomy between the social needs and spiritual needs of people. He also emphasized that the battle against oppression and starvation are part of the Christian's responsibility.

If we as Mennonites feel that the questions relating to peace, justice, and world hunger need to be injected into this conference, perhaps we should be less timid in suggesting these topics for the discussion sessions. We must also be prepared to provide the leaders for these discussion groups. No opportunity was given for students to discuss these topics at Urbana 79.

Urbana 79 provided students with the opportunity to hear about some of the world's needs. Their response—both financial contributions (more than US$500,000 was contributed in one offering) and public expression of their commitment to Christian service (about 13,000 stood for the call to commitment)—was overwhelming and, in a sense, disturbing. How can the resources of our Christian youth be employed so "that all nations might believe and obey Jesus Christ"?—Peter Kehler

Peter Kehler is Secretary for Asia for the General Conference Mennonite Church Commission on Overseas Mission, Newton, Kansas.

In review

African Theology En Route. Edited by Kofi Appiah-Kubi and Sergio Torres. Maryknoll: Orbis Books, 1979, 214 pp., $7.95 (pb)

Reviewed by Adolf Ens

Ever since the All Africa Conference of Churches dared to call for a "moratorium" on overseas aid in personnel and finance, church leaders of that continent have spoken with increasing conviction about the need for and the possibility of an African theology. Some preparatory steps had already been taken before the moratorium call. *Biblical Revelation and African Beliefs,* first published in 1969 by Kwesi Dickson and P. Ellingworth, provided Western readers with a glimpse of the theological thinking of a number of African church leaders. Harry Sawyer's *Creative Evangelism: Towards a New Encounter with Africa* (1968) and John Mbiti's *New Testament Eschatology in an African Background* (1971) were further samples of biblical and theological writing with a conscious African perspective that appeared before the moratorium call. The last half of the 1970s has seen the publication of a number of highly significant new books which reflect the emergence of an African ecumenical unity that transcends Euro-American confessional boundaries, and perhaps even of the beginnings of an African theological methodology. Two of these—by John Pobee and Gabriel Setiloane—are reviewed elsewhere on these pages.

African Theology En Route is a collection of nineteen papers given at the Pan-African Conference of Third World Theologians held in Ghana in late 1977. Seventeen of these were presented by Africans from eleven different countries. Protestants, Roman Catholics, and Orthodox were represented at the Conference. The Final Communiqué of the Conference provides a useful summary.

The book is divided into three sections. The first one attempts to identify the **new perspectives** that lead to a distinctive African theology. O. U. Kalu concludes his historical analysis of the evangelization process with the observation that, while Christianity has spread enormously in Africa, the resultant church is basically weak because it has remained "foreign." N. Mushete reviews the history of theology in Africa and rejects the idea of some universally valid theology. Against it, "Africans assert the right and the necessity of a specifically African theology" (p. 30). Appiah-Kubi says this even more strongly: "We demand to serve the Lord in our own terms and without being turned into Euro-American or Semitic bastards before we do so" (p. viii). G. Setiloane holds that "the legitimacy of the African claim to a unique and different theological point of view" has now been established (p. 62). African theology thus offers a "fourth dimension" to Christianity, alongside the Roman Catholic, Eastern Orthodox, and Protestant dimensions.

How different African theology will be from Western or liberation or black theology remains to be seen. That the latter two options exercise a strong influence is evident throughout the book. But the influence of indigenous religious life is of such strength that even the theological categories themselves, not just their content, are being shaped by the Africanness of the theologians.

The second section explores **theological sources** and identifies these as the Bible ("the basic source"—p. 81), the traditional religions, and African anthropology and cosmology. John Mbiti argues that the Bible is tremendously influential in shaping African theology and Christianity in spite of the fact that it is not accessible to many of the 185 million African Christians. With literacy rates ranging from 7 to 85 percent, many Africans are unable to read the Bible even though it has been translated in part or in full into nearly 600 African languages. In the preparation of his paper, Mbiti was able to draw on some 300 articles and books by African theologians, including commentaries and devotional literature as well as works on biblical theology, history, and religion. He warns against attributing to African cultural-religious background the role of "the hitherto unwritten 'African Old Testament'" (p. 90). Kwesi Dickson similarly affirms the importance of the Bible and attempts to show why African Christians, especially those in some of the independent churches, have a predeliction for the Old Testament.

Traditional religions are seen as "a major source for the study of the African experience of God" because "the God of history speaks to all peoples in particular ways" (Final Communiqué, p. 193). Setiloane claims that Africans are bringing to Christianity "a view of Divinity much higher, deeper and all-pervasive" (p. 63). M. Oduyoye argues that "utilizing African

beliefs in Christian theology is . . . an attempt to ensure that the African spirit revolutionizes Christianity to the benefit of all who adhere to it" (p. 116). Only by doing so can African Christianity "escape being a fossilized form of nineteenth-century European Christianity" (p. 110).

Two articles on the theatre and on black African art seek to identify elements in African culture and anthropology that can contribute to the development of African theology.

The third section deals with **liberation currents** and picks up themes such as "struggles for the transformation of socio-economic systems, the struggles against racism, sexism, and other forms of economic, political, social, and cultural oppressions" (p. 144). Two essays on the role of women in present-day Africa show that the "independent" churches have succeeded better than the others in involving women in important ministries. But the main concern of this section is with the political responsibility of the church. And on that issue differences among the advocates of black theology, liberation theology, and African theology stand out most clearly. Desmond Tutu makes a moving plea for liberation theology (in the aftermath of the death of Steve Biko), but as one among other theologies. Its validity will not be determined by whether it is acceptable to the West but "by whether it is biblical, by whether it is consistent with the Gospel of Jesus Christ, by whether it is guilty of self-contradiction, and by whether it works" (p. 168).

James Cone gives a black American perspective on the future of African theology, seeking particularly to establish a solid basis for substantive dialogue between it and black theology. An essay by another American black, Gayraud S. Wilmore, on "the role of Afro-America in the rise of Third World theology," concludes the book.

A wide range of viewpoints is represented in this valuable collection of essays. The indigenous ("so-called Independent") African churches are placed in a new and positive light. Their emergence, according to Appiah-Kubi's research, has its main cause in "spiritual hunger," not "political, economic, and social deprivation and racial discrimination" (p. 117). The moratorium issue is discussed in an even-handed manner. And the essays frankly identify a number of issues on which much work remains to be done before African theology can speak clearly to them.

This book is essential reading for all Western Christians involved in service in Africa. But its value extends far beyond that group. The insights to be gained from it will be most helpful for anyone involved in cross-cultural communication or for a critical evaluation of our own Western theological tradition.

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Toward an African Theology. By John S. Pobee. Nashville: Abingdon, 1979, 174 pp., $5.95 (pb)

Reviewed by David W. Shenk

This book is a fresh and stimulating attempt to develop an African Christian theology. Professor John S. Pobee combines an unapologetic commitment to Jesus Christ with a deep appreciation of his African heritage. His broad experience and training in the African cultural heritage, church history, and biblical studies as well as his experience as professor of New Testament and Church history in the University of Ghana are reflected in this serious attempt to catalyze movement toward a biblical theology which is relevant to the African experience. His principle foci are the Bible and Akan religion, but the specific foci do not detract from the broad significance of this study for African theological development.

The first part of the book establishes the need for an African Christian theology and the theoretical and theological framework within which the quest can proceed. Professor Pobee urges both a phenomenological and theological perspective. He then reviews salient themes in African and specifically Akan traditional religion. Having laid the groundwork for the theological quest, the author examines five issues in chapter by chapter sequence: culture, Christology, sin and evil, marriage, power.

In my opinion the most significant chapters are the two dealing with Christology and sin. Professor Pobee probes pre-Christian African theologies in an attempt to discover analogies which can help to interpret Christ as Son of God and Son of Man. I think he correctly perceives that the Nicean and Chalcedonian formulations, honed as they were in a Latinized Hellenism, are not very helpful within tropical Africa. With nonspeculative profundity the author probes the Gospels themselves. Jesus is human; he died. Jesus is God with us; he performed miracles. The Epistle to the Hebrews and the Gospel of John bring the two together in a manner understandable to a people in a society which has always perceived divine and human qualities in chieftainship.

The chapter on sin and evil affirms that African societies have always had a theologically grounded sense of right and wrong. The author decries forms of Western aspersion of African moral principles. He presents a fascinating etymological comparison between African (Akan) concepts of sin and the New Testament. Within both the Akan and biblical perspectives sin is missing the mark; it is a tragic perversion which is inimical to personal growth and appropriate relationships.

Other pertinent chapters deal with the church within African culture, marriage, and power structures. These salient issues are not easily resolved, and the author admits that he is exploring and probing for new directions. The chapter on polygamy is particularly instructive. With fascinating documentation Professor Pobee demonstrates that the Akan sages have always affirmed that polygamy is not ideal. The church and traditional viewpoints concerning polygamy have considerable commonality. Although polygamy is obviously not God's highest plan for marriage, the author appeals for a more redemptive approach toward those who are involved in polygamous relationships. He asks why churches excommunicate for polygamy but not for bribery.

The author urges those who believe that the quest for an African Christianity will produce unfortunate syncretisms to examine the syncretisms which the Western church has developed and affirmed as it absorbed and interacted with European cultures. Judgmental attitudes should be avoided. Africans also need to avoid bitterness concerning some of the painful

encounters with Western Christian arrogance. Resentment enslaves the spirit.

In a book of this nature many questions remain. The brevity of the book makes probing the issues with sufficient depth impossible. I believe, for example, that the chapter on sin would be strengthened by examining the centrality of the I-Thou encounter of biblical faith to the Christian perception of sin. I believe that the encounter dimension to faith is uniquely biblical; it is hardly perceivable in the African tradition or in any other nonbiblical tradition.

I am disappointed that no chapter is devoted specifically to soteriology. I believe issues such as marriage and power are fundamentally soteriological within the African context. While the chapter on the incarnation is excellent, equal attention to the soteriological significance of the atonement and resurrection of Christ would provide a framework within which ethical and social concerns could be addressed. For example, the crucifixion and resurrection of Christ should be central to a consideration of the Christian response to the problem of demonic power structures. Although the author notes in passing that the crucifixion has relevance, a deeper examination of the ethical, theological, and soteriological meaning of the cross within African perspectives would have strengthened the overall concern for opening the doors for the development of an authentically African Christian theology.

Professor Pobee is plowing new ground. The uniqueness of this book is that it combines expertise in the African heritage with biblical scholarship. The author stands between his West African colleagues, Professor E. Bolaji Idowu and the late Dr. Bayang Kato. The former seems to approach the study of African religion from the perspective of a Christian universalist. The latter finds it difficult to see any evidence of God at work prior to the coming of the gospel. Like Professor John S. Mbiti of East Africa, the author of this book believes that African insights are a marvelous preparation by God for the acceptance of the gospel. He also affirms that a free and uninhibited interaction between the gospel and African insights will produce a lively dialogue. Out of that dialogue a genuinely rich "made in Africa" Christian theology will emerge.

This book is exceedingly valuable, not only for the African theologian or church leader, but for Christians anywhere who are interested in listening in on the dynamic dialogue going on today within the soul of Africa's 150 million Christians.

David W. Shenk recently returned to the USA following service in Somalia and Kenya with Eastern Mennonite Board of Missions and Charities, Salunga, Pennsylvania. He has written extensively on the history and development of the church in Africa.

The Image of God among the Sotho-Tswana. By Grabriel M. Setiloane. Rotterdam: A. A. Balkema, 1976, 298 pp., $10 (pb)

Reviewed by Jacob A. Loewen

This is a book mission executives, missionaries, and thinking friends of missions need to read carefully. It has four main sections: (1) a description of the Sotho-Tswana social and cultural setting (pp. 9-86); (2) a short, evaluative history of the missionary endeavor (pp. 89-157); (3) a description of local Christianity after four generations of Christian influence (pp. 161-223); (4) a series of appendices, of which the most important are the glossary of Sotho-Tswana words (pp. 293-295), and a selected bibliography (pp. 296-298).

The book is representative of a new wave of mission studies written by Africans who are willing to ask questions about the mission and the resulting church even when such queries cast some shadows on the work. The writer, a fourth-generation Christian, is currently a mission executive in Switzerland. There is no hostility toward missions, and even the concerns expressed are gentle questions rather than strident accusations. Despite all the gentleness, one cannot help but feel that the author is not questioning merely peripheral or superficial aspects of the missionary approach; he is challenging the foundations of the enterprise in its present attitudes.

Here are some of Setiloane's concerns:

1. Why has such a large segment of the people opted against becoming Christians (p. 2)?

2. Why do even Christians feel it necessary to supplement their Christianity with elements of their pre-Christian religion (p. 1)?

3. Is the nature of the past and current mission approach such that it produces schizoid believers (p. 3)?

4. Did the early Sotho-Tswana become Christians on the basis of conviction, or because of pressure from external circumstances? Setiloane leaves no doubt that he feels it was the latter (pp. 123-131).

He sees the cause of the problems in the limitations or defects of the missionary approach. He is exceedingly cautious in his statements which are presented here in a more focused form:

1. The missionary of the past and the seminary of today see the African as having nothing to contribute to the enrichment of Christianity (pp. 3, 89-112).

2. The missionaries insisted that their own cultural expression of the gospel was part and parcel of its essence, not merely one of many possible "cultural wrappers" (pp. 89-112).

3. The missionaries insisted on introducing their partial religion (in which many aspects of life have been secularized and thus placed outside of the concern of religion), thus forcing the African—who wants a religion that embraces all of life—to fill in the gaps with his own religion (pp. 4, 185-223).

4. The missionaries' material (anti-spirit) orientation blinded them to the important functions of ancestral spirits which Setiloane sees as the "cloud of witnesses" of Hebrews 11 (p. 4, 185-223).

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Christianity Rediscovered—An Epistle from the Masai. By Vincent J. Donovan. Notre Dame, Indiana: Fides/Claretian, 1978, 200 pp., $6.95 (pb)

Reviewed by Wilbert R. Shenk

This rare story tells of one missionary's struggle to be faithful to his calling. His sense of call caused him to rethink and revise methods, to question his church's traditional ecclesiology, and to evangelize the Masai people in an unconventional manner.

Donovan, a missioner with the Holy Ghost Fathers, scarcely a year into his first term, wrote a letter to his bishop. He had

observed closely the missionary work being carried on in the region. He noted the impact of the well-run schools and hospital as well as the way his fellow missioners tried to enter into Masai life. "But never, or almost never," wrote Donovan, "is religion mentioned on any of these visits." Practically no Masai had become practicing Christians. "The relationship with the Masai, in my opinion, is dismal, time consuming, wearying, expensive, and materialistic. There is no probability that one can speak with the Masai, even those who are our friends, about God." Donovan proposed to the bishop that he be allowed to throw aside all theories and methods and services "and just go and talk to them about God and the Christian message." Fortunately, the bishop listened sympathetically.

In his quest for alternatives Donovan had come across the writings of Roland Allen. He studied Allen closely in light of the Masai people's situation and then formed a plan. He selected six Masai communities which he would visit weekly. He went to the leader of each community and explained frankly what he wanted to do. Each week for one year he would explain the Christian message. If at the end of one year they wanted to hear no more, he would withdraw. He would not be bringing candy for the children or medicines to treat the sick. He had but one purpose and he would stick by it. Each of the six leaders agreed to this arrangement.

"Going back and forth among these pagan communities week by week, I soon realized that not one week would go by without some surprising rejoinder or reaction or revelation from these Masai. My education was beginning in earnest," noted Donovan. He entered deeply into the Masai world view as he struggled to interpret the themes of biblical faith in their terms. Donovan discovered how profoundly the Masai understood reconciliation because of the way they deal with broken relationships. And one Masai elder gave him a special gift through his parabolic interpretation of the meaning of faith—"The Lion is God."

At the end of the year one village after the other requested baptism. The term they chose to identify themselves as Christian Masai was an inspired choice. In this as in all other matters, Donovan insisted on allowing them to find their own analogies and use their own cultural forms as vehicles for Christian expression. At the crucial point of leadership and pastoral care, however, he came up against the Roman Catholic concept of a celibate priesthood. In spite of evident gifted Masai who could have exercised such ministries, Donovan, in frustration, concluded that his church was not yet ready to adapt patterns of ministry to the Masai culture.

Every missionary ought to read this provocative and inspiring story. Donovan's own openness and capacity to grow and learn in the Masai context will challenge anyone. He admits his self-doubts and the debt he owes to the Masai. But he kept faith with his calling to share with them the gospel. At one or two points he makes statements with which I would disagree, but I consider this one of the truly significant books written by a missionary in the past decade.

Bibliography of New Religious Movements in Primal Societies. By Harold W. Turner. Boston: G. K. Hall and Co., 286 pp.; Vol. 1 ***Black Africa,*** 1977, $25, Vol. 2 ***North America,*** 1978, $25

Reviewed by Wilbert R. Shenk

During the past two decades the study of new religious movements in primal societies has won a place within the field of the study of religions. No one has worked more diligently at the task than Harold W. Turner. A longtime teacher in religious studies departments in African universities, he has also traveled extensively in North America, the Caribbean, and Oceania lecturing, researching, and gathering documentation on what is now recognized as a major phenomenon in religious history. In addition, he has established a major research center—presently located at Aberdeen University, Scotland—where these materials can be used.

What Turner is concerned about are those movements which have arisen in recent times which represent not simply the continuation of a traditional religion nor an outright appropriation of Christianity or some other historic faith. Rather these new religious movements are hybrids—movements which have their own character despite superficial similarities with either the historic or traditional religions. They may draw on Christianity or their traditional religion for certain forms or ideas, but they are distinctly different and new.

With the publication of these two volumes Turner now makes available to the student the fruit of his own painstaking and indefatigible labors of the past twenty-five years. The volume on Africa contains 1,906 items listed geographically according to the various areas of the African continent. The North American volume includes 1,607 entries, the bulk of which are for movements within the continental United States but covering also Northern Mexico, Canada, and Alaska. Both volumes contain sections citing works which provide theoretical understandings of these movements, general surveys, and specialized studies of individual movements.

These movements are important from many points of view. They are significant missiologically because their emergence frequently is a direct reaction to missionary activity. Indeed, many of these new movements appear to be adaptive responses to the incursions of outsiders, usually Christian missionaries. This, therefore, constitutes a rich field for the study of religious communication.

We look forward to the appearance of volumes three (Latin America and the Caribbean) and four (Asia and Oceania) which will complete Turner's planned four-volume bibliography. We salute Harold Turner for providing this invaluable tool to students of religion.

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Beyond Our Tribal Gods: The Maturing of Faith. By Ronald Marstin. Maryknoll: Orbis Books, 1979, 150 pp., $5.95 (pb)

Reviewed by Delbert L. Wiens

The marriage of liberation theology with stage development theory which this book solemnizes is presided over by the sociology of knowledge, with religious education and civil religion as its anxious witnesses. However modern the participants, this union has the old-fashioned purpose of bearing fruit—and in the home parish first of all.

Since readers of *Mission Focus* are well acquainted with religious education and are

at least aware of liberation theology and civil religion, it will not be necessary to introduce them. Though the name may be unfamiliar, sociology of knowledge is the attempt to think seriously about the old insight that our perceptions and thoughts are profoundly shaped by the communities to which we belong. "Faith is a question not so much of the visions we have as the company we keep" (p. 70).

Stage development theory builds upon the work of Jean Piaget, applying his concepts of mental development to other aspects of the self and to the whole of life. This book applies these ideas to the progress of faith much as Lawrence Kohlberg uses them to trace the stages of moral development. This means that several major crises may be expected **within** a life of faith as preludes to "conversions" ("leaps in being") in which the **way of having faith** changes profoundly even if its **content** remains the same. Each stage has its appropriate styles of faithfulness and holiness. Since this is clearly an idea whose time has come and which will necessarily change much of our thinking about the nature of the Christian life and mission, it is regrettable that Marstin has not spelled out these stages and the theory behind them in greater detail. (To what extent is this a form of dispensationalism individualized?)

Marstin assumes that more mature stages of understanding are also more inclusive ones and lead us from our tribal gods (the use of religion to sanction parochial societies and world-views) to the one true and universal God. This process requires mission because our understandings and sympathies grow to greater universality only as we truly encounter those who are different from us. In turn, this enlarged vision makes it possible for our mission to become good news.

Though the book does not offer a program for action, it will stimulate fruitful reflection. Though it damns mere "consciousness-raising," it will certainly do that. Though I was dubious about some of the conclusions, I was also convicted that I needed to enlarge the circle of those with whom I think and worship. Though I can easily criticize the book, I know of no other one that links these important ideas and applies them to the church and its mission.

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Theology and Mission: Papers Given at Trinity Consultation No. 1. Edited by David J. Hesselgrave. Grand Rapids: Baker Book House, 1979, 338 pp., $7.95 (pb)

Reviewed by John H. Yoder

Trinity Evangelical Divinity School, central both geographically and in profounder ways in the self-understanding of American evangelicalism, was host in March 1976 to a major *Consultation on Theology and Mission* which brought together theologians, missionaries, and mission administrators in a carefully structured study process ranging over a broad selection of priority concerns in contemporary missionary thought: Pentecostalism and charismatic movement; contextualization; changing Roman Catholicism; church growth; dialogue with non-Christian religions; changing political situations.

Each theme was surveyed by two careful introductory papers, three responses, two responses to the responses, and a summary report. Academics and practitioners intermingled in fruitful complementarity.

Each theme was dealt with in a well documented survey. For the ordinary readership of Baker Book House and the Trinity student the report volume may serve as an excellent first encyclopedic survey of contemporary issues in mission thought. For *Mission Focus* readers, it may be more fitting to concentrate on the psychology and politics of the volume.

The natural constituency of the consultation was the network of mission agencies represented by the Interdenominational Foreign Mission Association (once known as "Faith Missions" because of their distinctive support structure) and the Evangelical Foreign Missions Association (grouping largely denominational mission boards). The executives of the two associations wrote forewords for the volume. Their interest in theological discourse on this level represents for some of the agencies an institutional maturation, and for Trinity a vote of confidence.

The structure of the meeting, and of the position represented, is marked by a clear we/they identification of the positions in the field. Each of the six themes comes at "us evangelicals" from beyond, and needs to be evaluated critically. The two papers on each theme are not "pro" and "con" but academic and practitioner. No surprise that Catholicism, non-Christian religions, and decolonialization were not "represented" by an advocate; but even Pentecostalism and Church Growth were evaluated in the absence of their strongest spokesmen. Evaluated respectfully, open-minded, humbly; but still not dialogically. The solid base line of a theology guaranteed against confusion by commitment to the inerrancy of Scriptures is confirmed and clarified by the exercise of demonstrating how it enables a nuanced but firm discernment, in each of the six realms of what changes we may welcome, what insights we may gather, without fear that the foundations of our own views might need to change.

It is natural that the themes selected for this consultation were those which mission **agencies** need to face in doing their work. Some other themes, not less important for the mission of God's people as people, but less immediately the concern of sending agencies, thereby could be given less attention: world hunger and the maldistribution of resources as a structural sin; relations with mainstream American Protestantism and world conciliar agencies; theologies of liberation and empowerment; unfaithfulness to the gospel in the styles and structures of the "sending churches." Perhaps another consultation may give similar attention to such themes.

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The Theology of Change. By Jung Young Lee. Maryknoll: Orbis Books, 1979, 146 pp., $5.95 (pb)

Reviewed by Hugh D. Sprunger

Dr. Lee's book, subtitled "A Christian Concept of God in an Eastern Perspective," breaks some fresh ground in the contemporary search for relevant theologies for our time and for different cultures. Unlike many Asian theologians, Dr. Lee does not simply rearrange traditional Western Christian thought into a new system. The Eastern perspective takes the metaphysics of one of the most ancient, influential Asian classics, the *I-ching* (the *Book of Changes*), to reinterpret and

redefine some cardinal tenets of Christian faith.

In his introduction Dr. Lee briefly introduces the metaphysical principles and chief terms of the *I-ching. I* (change) is the ultimate reality in the everchanging world, in the constantly fluctuating universe. Change, the source of the constant creative process of becoming, is the product of the perpetual interaction of two mutually interdependent, complementary, primordial forces—*yang* (creative force) and *yin* (receptive force). *Yang* and *yin* do not represent a duality but different manifestations of one essence, change. The distinctions between *yang* (represented graphically by a solid line ———) and *yin* (represented by a broken line — —) are conditional and existential. By the ceaseless and cyclical process of union and separation, expansion and contraction, growth and decay, *yin* changes to *yang* and *yang* to *yin,* thus producing all that has been, is, and will be. *I* (change) is the ultimate reality manifested in and through *yang* and *yin.*

In Chapter One, "The Theology of Change: The Quest of Its Methodology," the theology of change using the metaphysical principles and logic of the *I-ching* (this logic is an inclusive both-and neither-nor logic) is compared and contrasted with traditional theistic theologies and contemporary, transitional process theology.

Traditional Western theology is dominated by Hellenistic thinking, based on the philosophies of Plato and Aristotle rather than Hebraic forms of thought and expression. Greek thinking stresses being as the ultimate reality and either-or kind of logic. God is the essence of being, the first cause and the unmoved mover. Thus traditional Hellenistic-formed Christian theology has a static worldview and ontology. But process theology is radically different and stresses creativity or becoming as the ultimate reality, rather than being. This emphasis on the dynamic aspect of God and his continuous, continuing creativity is in tune with the modern scientific worldview bases on Einstein's theory of relativity and Planck's quantum theory of physics.

The theology of change goes beyond process theology, to which it is also heavily indebted, to affirm that God, ultimate reality, is not merely the process of becoming but the source of becoming—change itself. Theology of change, in Dr. Lee's words, is a "theology of fulfillment." It embraces both the ultimate realities of the "being" of traditional theologies and the "becoming" of process theology and thus is an ecumenical, relevant, and ecological theology. Theology of change is ecumenical because of its inclusiveness through use of a universally acceptable metaphysical symbol for God (change-itself, a dynamic concept; and use of both-and neither-nor logic. It is relevant because it is compatible with the dynamic worldview of contemporary science and some Eastern religions. And it is ecological because it deals with the relationship of both human beings and nature with the ultimate reality.

In succeeding chapters Dr. Lee deals with "Change as Ultimate Reality: God as Change Itself" and "Both-And as Ultimate Reality: God as Inclusiveness." These chapters present a dynamic concept of God as the ultimate reality in terms of the changeless "change-itself" and apply both-and and neither-nor logic to the issues of God as personal and impersonal, God as male and female, the limitations of a personal God, and the problem of good and evil.

The next three chapters treat the triune God: "Change as the Source of Creativity: God as Creator"; "The Perfect Realization of Change: Jesus Christ"; and "The Spirit and the Unity of Change: The Holy Spirit and the Trinity." In the concluding chapter the implications of the theology of change for other theological issues are treated, e.g., freedom of human will, natural theology vs. revealed theology, the wrath of God, God's passibility, resurrection of the dead, and the idea of the *eschaton.*

In each chapter and with each theological issue Dr. Lee uses the metaphysical principles, terminology, and logic of the *I-ching,* reinforced by additional material from other Eastern religions, to formulate new insights and to reshape traditional Christian beliefs.

Written in English and published in the United States, this book is aimed at "theologians and theological students, Christian ministers, students of comparative religions and informed lay people interested in a Christian concept of God from an eastern perspective." Few readers will be ready to accept *in toto* the theology of change as a personal expression of Christian faith (due, perhaps, to the Greek captivity of our theological thinking). This book, however, is challenging, provocative, and profound. It stimulates new thoughts about a more dynamic concept of God, the value of natural theology, the proper and balanced relationship of creation and redemption, the members and manifestations of the Godhead—Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, and the need for both-and and neither-nor logic in giving human expression to the truth about and of God. There will be questions and reservations about the inclusive approach of the theology of change and accommodation to Eastern religious perspectives, e.g., the subject of reincarnation.

This book is not directed primarily toward missiologists, but it is a valuable and important book for all persons engaged in Christian mission and doing theology in Asia and among Asians. It offers new ways of perceiving and expressing the truth of the Bible and certainly contributes to dialogue with Eastern religions. Almost 2,000 years ago gifts of the magi from the East contributed to the life of Jesus. Now wisdom of the East presents new perspectives as a contribution to Christianity.

Hugh D. Sprunger has served in Taiwan with the General Conference Mennonite Church Commission on Overseas Mission. This year he begins an assignment with COM and Eastern Mennonite Board of Missions and Charities in Hong Kong.

The Way to Peace. By L. John Topel, S. J. Maryknoll: Orbis Books, 1979, 199 pp., $7.95 (pb)

Reviewed by Millard Lind

Heirs of sixteenth-century Anabaptism have a special interest in the liberation theologians of South America, for it was in a comparable milieu of social unrest and economic oppression that Anabaptism arose. It was also out of such a milieu that Mosaism and Christianity arose. It may be correct to say that only in the context of such a milieu can biblical faith be understood.

L. John Topel, a Jesuit scholar, is Associate Professor of Theology at Seattle University and Rector of the University Jesuit Community. He has done his graduate work at Pontifical Biblical Institute (Rome) and at Marquette University. His book is essentially an undergraduate

course on liberation theology which he taught at Seattle University, 1974-77.

Topel's book is mainly an exercise in biblical theology. He begins with the exodus and continues with the Sinai theme of government, the prophets, Wisdom, Psalms, and Apocalyptic literature on liberation (87 pages). He then devotes sixty-eight pages to a New Testament consideration of this theme and closes with an epilogue relating what he has discovered to the theology of liberation. His purpose is to determine the scriptural bases of a liberation theology (p. 146). He holds that liberation is "the central motif of the Bible" (preface).

Topel writes in the tradition of J. P. Miranda (*Marx and the Bible*), whom he quotes many times. While his writing is not as audacious as that of Miranda, he is nevertheless a better biblical scholar, thoroughly conversant with modern scholarly literature on the Bible. While he accepts the higher critical method, he regards the Bible as "no less inspired than if God had dictated the very words. This is revelation for us" (p. 1).

Topel's and Miranda's work raises again the question of biblical theology, which some biblical scholars have given up as an exercise in futility. Is there an essential unity in the Bible? If so, what is it? Can it be gathered up in such concepts as "covenant," "salvation History," "the kingdom of God," or "liberation"? Perhaps it would be better to acknowledge that there is a cluster of concepts with which the Bible deals. Topel and Miranda have done us a service, however, in showing the importance of liberation and justice among the biblical themes. Their emphasis has the advantage of uniting theology and ethics, the genius of what the Bible itself does. More biblical theology should be written in this way.

Topel takes the Servant Songs of Deutero-Isaiah seriously. He sees the fourth Song (Isa 52:13-53:12) as "probably the peak of Old Testament revelation" (p. 80). The purpose of the servant is to bring about true justice to the nations. His method is "the gentle, the non-violent way. The message is not shouted at the nations. The Servant has consideration even for those who are on their last legs" (p. 79).

Topel believes that the Sermon on the Mount is meant for today, that it is "this-worldly" (p. 120), dealing with "real persons' conduct in the real world" (p. 119). He devotes an entire section of his book to the practicality of the Sermon's ethic (p. 135ff.). In this section he sets forth the various evasions of the Sermon's ethic which Christians have held and points out the problem: that such approaches are calculating actions not on the principle of self-sacrificing love to which the Sermon calls us, but on that of enlightened self-interest. Such compromise of the gospel ethic "is totally ineffective in liberating our world from recurring patterns of injustice" (p. 137).

Topel is a convinced biblical pacifist. This is evident already in his treatment of the servant passages of the Old Testament, alluded to above. He holds that Isaiah 53 sets forth *the penultimate theology of retribution of the Old Testament: a person who accepts pain and rejection and refuses to respond in kind lives the law to perfection and places in the world a contagion of selflessness that converts others. However, to do this one needs a profound faith that a God who could ask for this kind of justice is a God who will vindicate the person who so lives as his servant* (p. 81). He states that by our own sufferings in the cause of justice we can bear the sins of others and heal their wounds (p. 88). He counsels that, in obedience to the Sermon on the Mount, "we try every non-oppressive means to convert the opponents of justice from their oppressive ways, which oppress them, too." "Choosing non-violent means of challenging justice," he says, "demands more ingenuity and more persistence and more heroism" than violent means, "but in the long run it will succeed because it cares not only for the victims of oppression but the persons of the oppressors themselves." He warns however that the Sermon is whole; we cannot accumulate the goods of this world at the price of impoverishing others, and still expect that it will do any good to practice nonviolence. "Non-violent resistance can work, in individuals and in nations, only when Christians are open-handed with their goods, faithful to their words, . . . in short, doing all that the sermon asks for the good of the neighbor" (p. 127).

As a consistent pacifist, Topel argues against the just war and the penal system. Contrary to the gospel, both are founded upon the principle of self-interest. He asks, "What war was ever prevented by the use of the just war theory?" (p. 137). Topel argues against those liberation theologians who think violence is an appropriate response to the violence of the oppressors (p. 156). As for prisons, he holds that while in theory some would maintain that their purpose is to reform the criminal, there is little commitment to this; the real motivation of society is protective and vindictive. The restoration of balance (the scales of justice) will not effect conversion (p. 138).

With all of this biblical approach, however, Topel still holds to a Constantinian Catholicism. This is evident already in his treatment of the Old Testament, where he confuses the government of Yahweh with the governments of humans, the governments of this world. Contrary to Samuel's argument that Israel's demand for kingship was rebellion against Yahweh, Topel believes that "Yahweh's providence for Israel was the graceful motion from within the people for a king" (p. 17). He knows the Bible well enough to say that "David was a smooth politician who supplanted Saul by politics." Yet he holds that "there is a mysterious dialectic between human process and divine election (a mystery more to be pondered than explained)" (p. 16).

Would it not be more correct to see Samuel's assessment of the demand for kingship as an expression of Israel's concept of political power based upon Yahweh's Torah and prophetic oracle rather than human wisdom and violence, and to see Samuel's adoption of kingship as an attempt to adjust that office to the Israelite concept? At any rate, Topel correctly sees that kingship in Israel was regarded as a failure and that the prophets looked forward to an ideal king who would be "Yahweh's instrument of justice for Israel and the world" (p. 19). Would this liberation then come through human government (as Topel claims) with its base in self-interest, or through the government of Yahweh in Christ with its base in self-giving—to which Topel so elegantly testifies? In other words, is the "mysterious dialectic" within the organism of the state itself, or is it between the people of Yahweh and the rebellious state, the state which Israel was tempted to become?

That Samuel attempted some such adjustment of kingship to the Israelite concept of power is revealed in Topel's excellent treatment of Chapter III, "Law and Society." There he correctly perceives that "the distinctiveness of Yahwistic religion is the cornerstone on which all Israelite law will be based" (p. 27, cf. 26).

Law in the Old Testament is never oriented to kingship, in contrast to all the extant law collections of the Near East outside of Israel. Topel is exegetically correct when he says that "what moderns accept as purely civil law the Hebrews saw as religious," and this not because Israel could not distinguish religious realms from secular ones (other Near Eastern societies did), "but because true religion sees the whole of one's life as relating the person to God" (p. 31). What place does this then leave for the state with its emphasis upon self-interest, except a place outside the role of God in Christ, though not outside his love and providential care?

This raises the question of the so-called "order of nature" as apart from the "order of grace." One must be careful not to misinterpret Topel on this point. He says that "true religion sees the whole of one's life as relating the person to God, even if . . . by dynamics that have a natural autonomy apart from the religious sphere" (p. 31). He further says, "Hebrew thought can open the way to an independent scientific study of the world apart from theology, and so to a dynamic drive to goodness and wholeness in the world even apart from the order of grace." Without arguing for the "total depravity of man," one might ask what the purpose of the order of grace is. Is it merely additive or does it **save**?

Topel really holds to the latter position (p. 156). And so it may be that his Constantinianism (p. 155) is in a state of flux. He says that the confusion of the medieval church on "the relation between these two orders of reality sets the problem that contemporary theologians must resolve if they are to develop a theology really liberating in our day" (p. 55). He cites Gutiérrez who calls the relation of church and state ***the*** problem in liberation theology (p. 193, n. 17).

We might dialogue with Topel about smaller concerns, but this is perhaps enough to suggest that a conversation between neo-Anabaptists and liberation theologians should continue. I use the word "continue" deliberately because the conversation is already begun, one evidence being Topel's citing of John Howard Yoder's *The Politics of Jesus* (p. 188, n. 9).

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Nepal and the Gospel of God. By Jonathan Lindell. Published by the United Mission to Nepal (Kathmandu, Nepal) in collaboration with Masihi Sahitya Sanstha (Delhi, India), 1979, 279 pp. Available in North America from Mrs. C. Valvic, 5744 23rd Avenue South, Minneapolis, Minnesota 55417 ($9.95 airmail, $5.95 seamail) or from Mrs. B. Eriksson, 5408 49th Avenue, Camrose, Alberta T4V 0N7 ($11.47 airmail, $6.95 seamail).

Reviewed by Marian Hostetler

When I arrived in Nepal in June 1979 as a summer volunteer with the United Mission to Nepal, a part of my orientation was to read *Nepal and the Gospel of God.* I knew that it had been written for the twenty-fifth anniversary of the UMN and expected it to be a history of the UMN. The book does include that, but it is much broader.

Lindell begins his book in 1707 with the arrival in the city-kingdom of Kathmandu of several Capuchin fathers from Italy. They reached there only after more than three years of travel and hardships. There they and others of their order remained off and on until 1769. Then when King Prithvinarayan Shah from Gorkha in the west conquered the other city kingdoms and united them into one, these missionaries were no longer welcome. At that time a group of sixty Christians and one father evacuated to India. That was the last trace of Christianity until nearly 200 years later.

The rulers of Nepal were not well-impressed with what they saw of Europeans in India (then Hindustan) and other parts of the world, and soon their policy was to allow no foreigners of any kind to enter the land. This remained Nepal's policy until 1951.

In the meantime a number of mission societies and individuals had an interest in Nepal. Since they could not enter the country, they clustered along its borders with India (east, west, and south) in order to contact Nepalis who left their country. This way the missionaries could learn the Nepali language, could translate the Bible, could evangelize, could provide medical services. From this work some Nepalis did become Christians. Lindell tells the story of one family group who wished to return to Nepal to live and to share the gospel. After making the long trip to Kathmandu, they were not permitted to resettle in their homeland, but were forced to return to India.

In 1951 King Tribuvan returned to power (his family had been kings in name only for over 100 years while the Rana family had been the real rulers, having made the prime-ministership hereditary and nearly all-powerful). This change in government brought a change in policy, and Nepal began to open itself to outside influence and to seek to make a leap into the twentieth century.

The first missionary "peek" into Nepal in this new era came about through three scientific bird expeditions by Dr. Bob Fleming from Woodstock School, India. During each trek he was accompanied by a physician (or two) who was in immediate demand wherever the expedition set up camp. Particularly at Tansen the request was insistent that they return and begin medical work.

At an ad hoc meeting in August 1953 at Allahabad, India, *it was felt that the mistakes that had come to light in the missionary movement in India and other countries, resulting from competition, possessiveness and independent action by denominational and separate organizations, should not be repeated in Nepal. Opinion pressed for exploring the possibility of establishing a Christian mission in Nepal on the widest possible cooperative basis, a combined interdenominational and international approach* (p. 144).

In September 1954 in Delhi eight groups became charter members of the United Mission to Nepal (including many of those who had been waiting and praying along Nepal's borders); another eight were there as visitors and observers. Through the twenty-five years since, the number of member bodies has increased to thirty-three (including Mennonite Board of Missions and Mennonite Central Committee), and the missionary force to 260 persons from about fifteen countries.

As well as being unique in its composition and formation, the UMN is unique in the situation in which it works and the way in which it works. It works by permission of and in collaboration with the government of a country which forbids changing of religion and proselytization. In its way of working, all missionaries are lay persons—secretaries, doctors, technicians, nutritionists, agriculturalists. The church is and always has been independent of the Mission. It is growing in spite of persecution and difficulties.

Lindell is uniquely qualified to write this

book. He is one who was interested in Nepal and "called" to go there long before it was open, one who was working along its border in Darjeeling, India, one of the early ones to enter (1956). In Nepal he served as a village community service worker, then eleven years (1960-1971) as the UMN executive secretary, and since then as headmaster of Pokhara Boys' Boarding School. Before retiring from Nepal in 1979, he spent a year and a half putting into this book his forty years of experience gathering materials in and about Nepal.

The book is written from two points of view, that of the Nepali onlooker and that of the outsider coming in, and is written in such a way as to be of interest to both. According to Lindell, the title, *Nepal and the Gospel of God,* was carefully chosen. It is about Nepal and it is about the Gospel of God—thus its look back to the Capuchin fathers and its careful inclusion of information about the several other groups also working in Nepal today. It is nicely illustrated with drawings by Nepali artist, Hem Poudyal.

Appendixes include Member Bodies of the UMN, General Agreement between His Majesty's Government and the UMN, Profile of UMN Personnel, and Projects of Work of the UMN.

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Liberating Grace. By Leonardo Boff, translated by John Drury. Maryknoll: Orbis Books, 1979, 236 pp., $8.95 (pb)

Reviewed by Alvin J. Beachy

Leonardo Boff writes as a Roman Catholic theologian who stands within the tradition of his church and yet welcomes liberation theology as a necessary corrective to the manner in which Roman Catholic manuals of theology have handled the doctrine of grace. In fact, Boff wants to get beyond talking **about** grace as a doctrine to **describing** grace as an experience of the presence and activity of God in the world (p. 5). "Grace," says Boff, "is the name for God himself insofar as he is always communion, exodus from self, love for others, and sympathy with those that are different from him. Grace is not a quality of God; it is the essence (*divinitas*) of God. God does not possess grace; he is grace" (p. 4).

The goal of grace, according to Boff, is nothing less than the divinization of human beings, which is for him the meaning of salvation. Boff argues that every human being has a natural desire to love God, because a *human being is a personal subject who is capable of receiving God's grace . . . . This minimum is what makes possible God's union with him, both on earth and in heaven; yet this union is never mere fusion, absorption, or a divine emanation. The union between God and humanity in grace is analogous to the union of the two in the mystery of the Incarnation: it takes place without confusion, alteration, division, or separation. The distinction between the two makes their union possible; and the latter is a real union because there is no confusion between them* (p. 45). Boff describes the divinization of humanity as a process of divine filiation which *has its roots in eternity and the Trinity. Its revelation to us in Jesus made us aware of something that had always existed in human beings. From all eternity we were children of God in the Son; with the Christ-happening, the filial structure of human beings is brought to the level of historical awareness. It can now be celebrated, lived, and considered thematically in a way never possible before* (p. 191). While the full realization of this divine filiation remains for Boff an eschatological event, he nevertheless believes that the Christian pilgrim can have an authentic foretaste of that experience in the present life.

Grace, according to Boff, involves both God and humans in encounter, openness, freedom, and dialogue. And in that encounter, both God and humans are affected. God is described as follows: *God the Father realized himself continually from all eternity as a Mystery that offers himself as the Son and the Holy Spirit. He prolongs his communication and self-giving in worldly terms. Once the world is established, he penetrates ever more deeply into it with a superabundant and astonishing outpouring of love and self-giving* (p. 4).

Human beings are described by Boff as persons who *ever remain open to the possibility of being something more and of relating to others. They are not just a being-there; they are an ex-istence. They always are living an encounter with what is different from themselves. . . . Thus grace is the supreme reality that envelops them insofar as it signifies encounter, limitless openness, and communion* (p. 4).

Because of the historical reality of sin, however, human beings are not only enveloped by the supreme reality of grace. They are also threatened by the possibility of dis-grace. The latter is absurdity while "grace is the Absolute meaning that brings fulfillment to everything" (p. 4). Dis-grace is defined as absurdity because there is no logic that can explain it or make it understandable.

Boff sees the history of evil, violence, destruction, and cruel inhumanity in this world as evidence of the fact that as created beings we will always experience grace amid the possibility of dis-grace. "Concrete human beings . . . are both Christ and AntiChrist, openness and closedness. Their concrete experience is a paradoxical one of both grace and dis-grace" (p. 5).

Boff's aim in this book is to give us those signs whereby we may recognize the experiences of grace as absolute meaning with as much clarity as we have in our experiences of dis-grace as absurdity. In order to do that he writes a book of 216 pages, divided into eighteen chapters and four major divisions. Part one, "Posing the Theme of Grace Today," lays the foundation for Boff's approach and explores past and present doctrines of grace. It also criticizes the factors that have conditioned the traditional Roman Catholic elaborations of grace and takes a look at present-day horizons which must be taken into account if theology wishes to accomplish the task of **describing the experience of grace** rather than **talking about grace as a thing.** Section two, "Experiencing Grace," is in a sense the heart of the book. Here Boff talks about grace as "the original Christian experience" and how this experience manifests itself in our scientific technological world. As a Latin American theologian who has embraced liberation

theology, Boff is convinced that theology must take into account the social structures of oppression and dependence which affect the way grace and dis-grace are experienced on the Latin American scene. While Boff is deeply committed to the eradication of these structures of oppression and dependence, he does not neglect to speak about the experiences of grace which individuals can have within and in spite of those structures. Part three, "Theological Reflections on the Grace Experience," deals with the way in which God's saving will and human freedom are always involved in the grace experience. For Boff, grace is a process of liberation, leading to God. In part four, "God and Humankind as Revealed in the Grace Experience," Boff makes the important observation that the ontological change in the Christian believer, brought about by the Holy Spirit in the process of divinization is really the basis for Christian ethics; or, as he would phrase it, "being is the ground of doing." Being a Roman Catholic, Boff discusses this in terms of the Catholic category of virtues, but he nevertheless makes the valid point that unless being is understood as the ground of doing, we lapse into psychological explanations or the moralistic approach which *examines doing detached from being, virtues detached from the fundamental option (new being), instead of regarding the practice of the virtues as the concrete embodiment of the new creature and the dynamic expression of the presence of divine grace"* (p. 163). Boff maintains, and I think rightly so, that where doing is detached from being, Christianity either degenerates into inhuman legalism or does not get beyond moralistic Pharisaism.

Basic to Boff's entire thesis is the conviction that *the dimensions of encounter and dialogue are part and parcel of the reality of grace. Grace implies the alteration of both God and humans. It establishes an encounter, a dialogue, and a flow of mutual love. Both are vulnerable because grace operates in the framework of freedom, where there can be a flowering of the unexpected or a degeneration on the part of human beings. Humans can close up in themselves and reject love. Thus grace reveals the authentic structure of human beings. On the one hand, they embody a native desire for God; on the other hand, they can also reject this God* (pp. 15-17).

Since God is the Mystery who is the foundation of all created existence, including human existence, we cannot, according to Boff, even in our deepest dis-grace cut ourselves off from God. This does not mean that we should say *that everything is grace even when it seems to be dis-graceful. We cannot use the expression to justify all the calamities of history. The only thing we can say is that human beings can be motivated by dis-grace to ascend to God because God is the ultimate theological foundation of both. No dis-grace is so absolutely disgraceful that it does not contain some appeal to its ultimate theological foundation, God. Dis-grace is always a relative thing. It is the dis-grace of a creature, not of God who is absolute. Bad as creatures may be, they can never establish their independence from God or break their ontological tie to him. Dis-grace itself does not produce grace, but it offers the occasion for human beings to look to the transcendent foundation which makes it possible in the first place* (p. 69).

This is important for Boff and for the whole structure of liberation theology as he interprets it. It means that in the necessary struggle to be liberated from unjust social structures which oppress and marginalize the poor, those who struggle for liberation must remember their oppressors are human beings who are loved and upheld by God, even in their dis-grace. On the other hand, the church must not, as the institutional church on the Latin American continent too often has in the past, "work hand in glove with those who are fostering humanity's exploitation of humanity" (p. 29). This happened, says Boff, because the institutional church did not *keep alive the memory of Christ's freedom in all its subversive and dangerous aspects. Instead, it turned the figure of Jesus into an icon and restricted it to the ecclesiastical sphere. The common people were not made aware that the preaching of Jesus and his gospel is a force for present-day liberation, protest, and transformation. The sacraments were experienced solely in terms of the inner life and cultic worship. They did not lead to a transformation in one's way of living and in interpersonal relationships. They did not inspire people to overcome the structural injustices that sinfully separate brethren sharing the same faith. Such Christian values as humility, submissiveness, and the shouldering of Christ's cross were represented in ideological terms so that they ended up under-pinning the status quo and castrating the people's potential for liberative reaction* (p. 29-30).

Boff is clear about the fact that because of the presence of sin in human history no human project (his term for becoming the theoanthropic person) will ever be entirely without dis-grace during any earthly pilgrimage. We await the time when we shall be theoanthropic beings, indwelt by the Holy Trinity, as an eschatological event (p. 211), but here and now we can have authentic experiences of grace as faith, hope, love, friendship, peace, joy, critical spirit, courage, and humor (pp. 164-74).

Only those who asked me do this review know whether I was asked to do so because of my book on *The Concept of Grace in the Radical Reformation.* I was struck by the fact that Anabaptist understandings of grace are closer to Catholic ones than to traditional Protestant formulations. Like Boff, the Anabaptists insisted that grace had to be experienced in an atmosphere of freedom which neither God nor humans could ignore. Like Boff, some of the Anabaptists at least understood grace as a dynamic process of divinization which can be experienced as an ontological change that actually takes place in this life, though its final goal is not reached until after death. Like Boff, the Anabaptists were careful to point out that this does not mean the elimination of the line of demarcation between God as Creator and human beings as creatures. Like Boff, the Anabaptists saw being (the new creature in Christ) as the ground of doing. Like Boff, some of the Anabaptists had an ecumenical view of the work of the Holy Spirit, allowing for the possibility of a church of God outside of Christ and before Christ, for those who lived according to the law of God written on their hearts (See Boff, p. 198).

I found this book both helpful and inspiring and would recommend that it be read by all who contemplate mission work in any part of South America.

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Editorial

In its 1979 report, Amnesty International highlights current violations of human rights around the world. Governments continue to use arbitrary arrest, torture, and imprisonment as means of political control notwithstanding the Universal Declaration of Human Rights (1948) and a series of additional "rights" declarations adopted by the United Nations and other coalitions of nations during the past twenty-five years. The existence of these several documents points up two facts. First, the human rights theme has established itself as a key theme in international discourse only in recent times. Second, we have widely different concepts of human rights represented in these various documents. The Western liberal individual rights tradition is one strong strand, but socialist egalitarianism offers another basis, while Third World thinkers have stressed the primacy of basic human needs.

The emphasis in recent literature on justice as an integral part of the Christian gospel can mislead us into thinking that concern for human dignity and well-being is of recent origin. But it finds its theological rootage in biblical revelation, especially the prophetic tradition. Historically, it springs from several sources, including the Greek philosophical and political tradition.

The Christian missionary movement, especially since the seventeenth century, has helped convey this vision throughout the world. In making this assertion, however, we must enter several qualifications.

1. The modern missionary movement has not operated from a full-blown theology of human rights. Rather, embedded in the underlying motives for missionary action was a strong humanitarian concern. Allowing for the culturally conditioned form of expressing it, we nevertheless must acknowledge the extent to which pioneers of the modern missionary movement had a vision for the wholeness of human welfare. The modern gibe at the phrase "saving souls" is often nothing more than a cheap putdown. Not until the late nineteenth century did a certain variety of missionary emerge who ruled out ministry to the whole person. One of the chief complaints today's radical evangelicals make against their elders is that they have betrayed a heritage which maintained a biblical stance with regard to the full range of human need by selling out to a one-sided emphasis on the "spiritual."

2. Within the missionary movement itself we can trace an evolution of concern for human welfare. On the one side, missionaries frequently found themselves at odds with soldiers, traders, explorers, and colonial governments over the treatment meted out to indigenous peoples. Slavery became the focal point for this contest for at least two generations. (See the study by Stiv Jakkobsson, *Am I Not a Man and Your Brother?*) But missionary statesmen and their associates also organized societies to lobby against the formation of European colonies in the non-Western world, applied pressure on colonial governments to provide education for the masses in the vernacular languages, and campaigned for reform of practices in other societies—such as footbinding in China, the burning of widows in India—which they felt were contrary to human dignity and well-being. From another source, the earlier concept of "rights" and "well-being" was subjected to testing and change. Through linguistic and ethnographic studies, missionaries contributed to the emergence of anthropology. The early self-confidence in Western culture as the norm for evaluating human welfare crumbled. This led to a third qualification.

3. Even when a vision for human rights in relation to the task of Christian mission was not clear—and missionaries got themselves entangled in various sociopolitical alliances which compromised their witness—it was present implicitly and managed to burst the confines of a system or culture. Thus, for example, imperialism contained the seeds of its own destruction. No amount of rationalizing the special role of the West in history could change the fact that the means employed contradicted the professed principles on which Western civilization rested. Proponents of Western civilization appealed directly or indirectly to Christian ideals in support of their claims for the moral superiority of the West. Respect for the dignity of the individual and democracy as the preferred form of government could be advocated only at the peril of an imperial system which allowed a privileged few to control the destinies of the masses. In the long run it proved impossible to argue that what was good for the English was not equally good for the people of India. If the American people could revolt against British rule, so could Nigerians.

In a chapter entitled, "The Mission Endeavor as a History-Making Force" (*Christ the Meaning of History*), Hendrikus Berkhof has suggested that the gospel contains the seed of fundamental change. Missionary witness since the first century AD has scattered this seed across the world. Sometimes it comes to fruition by altering social forms and values; always it points to God's intention for mankind, thereby offering history a goal.

—Wilbert R. Shenk

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The Urban Ethos: Building Churches in a Pagan Environment

HENRY J. SCHMIDT

Truman B. Douglas shares in "The Job Protestants Shirk," " 'There are three great areas of our world which churches have not really penetrated. They are: Hinduism, Islam and the culture of our modern cities.' The underlying cause, I believe, is an anti-urban bias which has almost become a point of dogma in American Protestantism" (Lee 1962:88). This anti-urban bias is nurtured by a rural mindset (Noyce 1975:21-22); by a conservative theological orientation that individualizes and spiritualizes human social problems; by Jacques Ellul's paradigm of the city as a symbol of human rebellion and independence from God (1970); and by the tendency to describe the city in 3-D terms: dirty, deprived, and depraved.

Although the anti-urban bias is one of the factors which hinders urban church building, that is not the primary focus of this paper. An even more basic hindrance to urban evangelism stems from a failure to understand the fundamental shifts in culture—in the values, orientations, perspectives, and mindsets of the people we are trying to reach.

This paper is a plea for a strategy of evangelization in the church which flows out of "the constraining love of Christ" and out of a deep awareness of the urban context. What are the forces that shape urban culture? What are the prevailing moods, needs, and values? How can the gospel best get a hearing? How much is evangelism strategy determined by the questions people are asking? What is the configuration of the good news in a society that is increasingly urbanized, secularized, and paganized? How can the church help people come to grips with their personal alienation from God and their fractured relationships with others? What about the vast number of people who aren't even asking religious questions—who feel no overwhelming need for God or for change? How does the church communicate the exclusiveness of Christ's claim as "The Way, The Truth, and The Life" in an increasingly pluralistic culture? These questions are basic to the formulation of an urban strategy if the church is to be effective. Failure to face them realistically may well mean that our good news becomes no news to people in the city.

Presuppositions and definitions

An understanding of perspective and terms is basic to communication. In this paper I am making a number of important assumptions:

Christ's message the same in all contexts

A commitment to Christ, the gospel, and the church is basic to any evangelization strategy. My commitment to evangelism follows Paul's pattern outlined in *Apostle to the City:* the conversion of sinners, the establishment of

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churches, and witnessing to Christ's lordship in society and in the world (Greenway 1978:79-87). The church must constantly guard against changing its message and against refusing to change its methodology. Without minimizing the importance of content, this paper emphasizes the context. Paul's reminder that "the Gospel is the power of God unto salvation to everyone who believes" (Rom 1:16) is important in the most pagan environment. The assessment that the use of the urban metaphor (Rev 22) as the final destiny of humanity is not only a mark of Christianity's uniqueness, but a testimony of the radical nature of personal and social salvation (Greenway 1979:60-70).

In but not of the world

The church must be willing to ask both the "effectiveness" and the "faithfulness" question. *The Social Teaching of the Christian Churches* suggests that church and society exist in a close relationship (Troeltsch 1960:331-353). The church shapes society, but the reverse is also true. Troeltsch works off the model of compromise and develops a church-sect typology (the church is institutional, is based on mass membership, is coercive about faith, adjusts to its environment, focuses on Christ as Redeemer; the sect is voluntary, is separated from the world, encompasses believers only, is non-coercive, and focuses on Jesus as Lord). The weakness of the church model is over-accommodation. The danger of the sect is social irrelevance. The church lives in the constant tension of being "too 'this' worldly" and "too 'other' worldly." The church must be involved with the world but not identical to it in values. As Christians we are committed to evangelizing this world, but we are not captive to its values. Since the context of any generation is never neutral, the church must constantly guard against the extremes of being seduced by its environment and of remaining too aloof from society. The church is always called to be both prophetic and pastoral, faithful and effective.

City, the center of the church's mission

The concern for urban evangelism is to influence the major personal, economic, political, and social spheres with the gospel. Harvard University Professor Harvey Cox has said that "future historians will record the twentieth century as that century in which the whole world becomes one immense city" (1966:273). Population growth and shifts are illustrative: It took until 1850 for the world population to reach one billion, but only another seventy-five years to double to two billion, and only fifty years to double again to four billion in 1975. According to present projections the fifth billion will be reached by 1987 and the sixth billion by 1998 (Population Reference Bureau). The percentages in terms of world urbanization show the following trends: 1800, 3.4 percent; 1900, 13.6 percent; 1950, 28.2 percent; 1975, 41.1 percent; projected for 2000, 55 percent. In the United States the urban shift is even more dramatic. When the Constitution was adopted (1789) only five percent of the population had settled in fewer than twenty-five cities (population of 2,500 or more). Today over ninety percent of Americans live within the orbit of one of over 200 metropolitan areas that contain over 4,000 cities. The United States is becoming urbanized at a rate of more than one million acres per year.

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However, our concern reaches beyond the physical spread of cities through population shifts from rural to urban, urban to suburban, suburban to rurban, or city to city. The deeper issue is how cities affect people, interpersonal relationships, and the character of community. We are concerned about a theology of compassion for the city which brings reconciliation, wholeness, and hope to people. Such a theology must face the reality of urban tensions caused by centralized economic and political power; compartmentalization by trades, professional incomes, neighborhoods and ghettos; overcrowding which has an impact on housing, safety, transportation, pollution; and segmentation which affects education, the family, economics, and racism. Since the city is the center of political, economic, and social influence in modern civilization, the city is the locus of the church's mission.

Important definitions

Urbanization. According to the Population Reference Bureau, an urbanized area is a city of 5,000 or more; a metropolitan area has a population of 50,000 or more (Geruson and McGrath 1977:40). Demographically the city is defined chiefly in terms of size, density, and heterogeneity. Sociologically, urbanization refers to the radical reordering of social relationships that has brought forth new patterns of political, familial, and religious institutions. The city and urbanization are best understood by focusing on three critical functions:

1. The city's "functioning as exchanger and transmitter of values, culture and wealth" and the impact of these on the multiplicity of lifestyles found in the city.
2. The city as the "producer, creator and developer" of new styles, social forms, and technics that ultimately transform civilization.
3. The city as a "magnet and liberating force" for the poor, the disenfranchised, and the less fortunate people of the world who, in turn, add to the richness and diversity of culture and supply the energy that keeps the motors of the city running (ibid:2).

Modernity and modernization are descriptive terms for the shift from a primitive, homogeneous, familial, traditional society to a society characterized by a progressive outlook, production mentality, heterogeneity, and formal, highly structured relationships. Although capitalism, urbanization, industrialization, and bureaucratization are intricately related in the process of modernization, several sociologists suggest the primary carriers of modernity are the capitalistic economy and the state bureaucracy (Weber 1958a; 1958b; Berger 1967). All others are secondary.

At the heart of modernization is the shift from an agricultural to an industrial economy. The modern age is based on a production economy with increased specialization and diversification. No one person any longer "makes a product." Instead each is part of a pattern of production.

Bureaucracy refers to a form of rational organization that is in opposition to the informal familistic basis known in premodern society. The bureaucratic consciousness is characterized by competence, efficiency, proper procedure, and orderliness in order to maximize production. In addition to a general insensitivity to individual needs, bureaucracy can be faulted for aiding in the "permanent identity crisis" of individuals and of fostering a "technical mentality" (Schuller 1966:20). As Norbert Wiener once said, "We have learned to answer the question how, but we are no longer capaable of asking the question, why?" (ibid:21). The question we return to again and again is how modernity affects people's outlook, mindset, and value system. My perspective on urbanization reflects a Western mindset.

Forces causing erosion of Christian values in urban culture

According to sociologists Peter Berger and Thomas Luckmann, the three primary characteristics of the modern consciousness are secularization, pluralization, and privatization. These three concepts help the church to understand the shift in values and the role of religion in modern culture. In one sense these processes may be viewed as a gigantic press with an all-pervasive, powerful, and pressurizing force.

Secularization

Secularization is the process by which religious ideas and institutions lose their significance and influence in modern society. Already in 1937 the Oxford conference clearly defined the process: *Since the Renaissance the secular order has gradually established its independence of ecclesiastical control. The church is no longer authoritative and dominant, it is only one among the many influences and movements of the modern world. Today convinced Christians are everywhere in a minority in a predominately un-Christian world* (Greenway 1979:47).

In the modern world Christian ideals become less meaningful. Church institutions become more marginal. The premodern world, although not Christian, was conscious of a supernatural world which existed beyond the natural world. Family, sex, farming, and morality were interpreted in a supernatural framework. Today this is less the case. Secularization is the only reality. People worship the present. Peter Berger suggests that they live in a world with no windows; the "here and now" has become all. For secular men and women the supernatural is less real. This is true for a number of reasons. In part it is due to refusal to acknowledge God, but it is also because the image of humankind as "the creator" makes God more distant. Human planning, progress, technological advance, and achievement give people a sense of power and of being in control. Secularism removes the supernatural dimension from life in general and from Christianity in particular.

Pluralization

Pluralization is the process in modern society by which the number of choices and options is greatly accelerated. This is illustrated by the diversity in lifestyles, hobbies, fashions, subcultures, restaurants, and jobs in modern culture. While it may be argued that diversity is not novel to our society, what is different is that in previous cultures religion was more of a unifying factor (Hinduism in India, Christianity in Europe and North America). A number of factors contribute to the increase in choices and options. Job specialization is the result of technological and industrial progress. Job patterns and the economic order make people more mobile. Mass communications and transportation increase the options. Economic affluence provides the resources to do more and see more. The knowledge explosion enlarges the horizons. This results in the development of a disposable mentality, a transient culture, and the death of permanence. Everything is sub-

ject to change—jobs, residences, values, marriage partners. The counterpart of more choice and change is less commitment and less continuity.

Pluralization has a deep impact on Christianity. It in fact reduces Christianity to one of the options in the marketplace of religions. For many, Christianity in modern society is simply the seventh option after religious encounters with TM, Science of the Mind, Hari Krishna, Moonism, Mormonism, and Buddhism. If secularism makes each religion less real in terms of the supernatural, pluralization makes Christianity just one of the many religious options.

Privatization

Privatization is a technical sociological term used to describe the separation of the public and the private spheres in an expanding, industrialized, urbanized culture. In one sense this is the result of pluralization and segmentalization where modern men and women participate in so many different worlds (business, church, home, PTA, civic organizations, country club, neighborhood good-will drives). The public sphere is the world of big business, labor unions, multinational corporations—a world that is highly organized and efficient but largely impersonal, anonymous, unfeeling, and mysterious. Production and efficiency are more important than personal values and fulfillment. The private sphere is the world of leisure, family, hobbies, and personal fulfillment. The private sphere offers amazing freedom, numerous options, and in a real sense is an escape from the regimented pressures of the public sphere.

The problem is that religion and church become associated almost exclusively with the private sphere. The implications of this, according to David Schuller, are that "more decisions of greater significance are made on the basis of financial, military, social, productive and medical considerations than on the basis of religious and ethical considerations" (Schuller 1966:19). Religion in this modern context becomes "religion of the private sphere." Even though modern humanity is described as conversion-prone and "born again" religion is popular, in many instances it is the newest version of "private religion." Private religion gives cohesiveness, a sense of meaning, personal peace, and direction to an individual's life. It helps people integrate their lives personally but has little impact on public morality. In part the church unconsciously augments the secularizing of our culture when it encourages private piety apart from public responsibility. The opposite error—of focusing the public sphere at the expense of paganizing the private sphere—must also be avoided.

The implications of secularization, pluralization, and privatization are extremely important for the church in its urban context. Os Guiness warns the church against promoting either the extreme of privatized religion which reduces Christianity to a private affair—a folk religion—that is "privately engaging but socially irrelevant"; or bureaucratized religion which operates with technology, efficiency, and long-range plans to "package the gospel" for effective marketing, but in the process becomes a Christian version of a multinational corporation without divine dynamics or personal warmth (Neighbour 1979:51-76).

The process of secularization, pluralization, and privatization aid in the process of paganizing culture. Modernity strips humanity of certainty. It miniaturizes faith. It shifts the focus from absolutes and the content of faith to the subjective and experiential dimension of faith. "Marketing the gospel" leads to the loss of the impelling power of truth. In the concern to win people, communication becomes fuzzy, the gospel is truncated, and the demands of discipleship are too easily omitted. Through these processes Christian values and the supernatural authority of religion have been eroded in Western culture. This means the church is faced with neopaganism in society. According to *The Gospel in a Pagan Society,* urban culture today has more affinity with the pluralism and paganism of Athens than with the homogeneous religious heritage of Jerusalem (Prior 1975).

Understanding our context

Though cities are not new to civilization, early cities had a rural orientation which included more personal, primary, and direct social relationships. In order to see the quantitative change and the shift in basic values which has occurred through accelerated urbanization today, several idealized contrasts may be helpful.

Sociological types: changing values

"Gemeinschaft" and "Gesellschaft." Ferdinand Tönnies' study of "Gemeinschaft" and "Gesellschaft" is most helpful in understanding the shift in values and the urban mentality (Tönnies 1940). Whereas rural men and women lived in sparsely settled areas which included significant primary relationships, a high degree of social solidarity, integration, and economic interdependence, and little mobility; urban men and women live with population density, an increasing number of secondary and indirect relationships, heightened social change, stratification segmentation, more mobility and economic interdependence. Francis Dubose builds on Tönnies' typology and illustrates how the locus has shifted from the prototype of the home and a community orientation in the rural setting, to the corporation and the mass organizational mindset in the urban context. (1978:34-35).

The old and new culture. Philip Slater provides another helpful analysis in his contrast between the old culture and the emerging new culture of the early 1970s (1970:100). The old culture gives preference to property rights over personal rights, technological requirements over human needs, competition over cooperation, violence over sexuality, concentration over distribution, producer over consumer, means over ends, secrecy over openness, social forms over personal expression, striving over gratification, and oedipal love over communal love. According to Slater, the new counterculture reverses all of these priorities. As urbanization continues, this means that an ever increasing number of people have their total orientation in the framework of "Gesellschaft" and the new culture.

The erosion of capitalism. According to several analysts, a fundamental economic shift is currently taking place with the bankruptcy of capitalism which was based on the philosophy of unlimited resources, development, growth, and expansion (Rifkin and Howard, 1979). Their provocative piece deals with the subject of God in an age of scarcity, constriction, shortage, and limitation, and with how the evangelical church can be in the forefront of leadership in responding to a new economic order.

Shifts in values that affect the church

How have people changed because of the secularization process? A growing number of people can live their lives and make their decisions without conscious regard for the Christian faith or church. Modern men and women are influenced by many religions, philosophies, lifestyles, and assumptions, not just by Christianity. People are still religious beings, but they are secular. According to one survey in Vancouver, British Columbia, sixty percent of the people interviewed felt quite satisfied with life and perceived little need for change or for God (Leighton Ford 1975). Seven generalizations about secular people seem both defensible and able to help the church focus its message. These descriptions are informed by several sources (Soper 1961; Schaller 1976:32-45; Hunter 1979:86-91; Glasser 1972).

From survival to identity. William Glasser's basic contention is that World War II represents a watershed in terms of changing values and mindsets. Prior to World War II people asked, "How do I survive?" Survival goals were affirmed by the Puritan work ethic, life on the frontier, Protestant churches, the depression, and two world wars. The agenda in the last twenty-five years has changed from survival to identity. More and more people are concerned with a search for recognition. Pre-World War II people went to school to get an education (survival goals—job, money) rather than to discover themselves.

The implications of this shift are many. The first agenda item the gospel message of the church must address in society is the identity question. This also means that people are finding more meaning in their lives from recognition and acceptance as persons than from recognition as performers at a task. This helps to explain the different generational values and perspectives. For example, a father raised on survival goals says to his son, "Take the job; even if you don't like it, the pay is good." The son, whose orientation is identity, says, "Dad, I can't be happy on the job no matter how much it pays. I want a job where I can express myself as a person." Glasser also points out that in an identity-oriented society the important motivating force is involvement and cooperation, not power, as is the case in a survival-oriented society. Last, for both individuals and organizations, focus on survival goals tends to produce a greater sense of unity, while the quest for fulfillment and identity tends to be more divisive.

From functional to relational. Lyle Schaller illustrates this shift with the comment of a forty-year-old junior high teacher: *About seven to ten years ago I began to realize that reinforcing self-image was a more important part of my job than teaching content. When I began teaching, the balance was 90% content and 10% concern for kids as individuals. Today it is at least 60 to 70% on building relationships with kids and 30 to 40% content* (Schaller 1976:38). Influential teachers and preachers are usually remembered more for relationship than for scholarship. Increasingly in a technological, depersonalized, production-oriented society, the relational dimension becomes crucial.

How does this affect the church? A basic tendency among lay people is to think relationally, while professionals think functionally. Effective leadership in the church must include both dimensions, but it needs to accentuate the relational. This shift also helps one understand the dynamics at work in the disintegration of the family. Functional glue is inadequate in maintaining family and church relationships. The church must help people build authentic relationships in a multitude of spheres.

From knowledge to ignorance. According to Donald Soper, a third change in people caused by secularization that is important to gospel communication is one from basic knowledge to fundamental ignorance about Christian matters. In earlier society, even illiterate people knew something about Christianity. Many were catechized and had an orientation in a Christian value system. Today the church cannot assume people have a Christian orientation. People are ignorant concerning the meaning of Christianity. Masses are ignorant, and many are misinformed. Pluralization and privatation of religion are contributing factors to the ignorance and confusion. Too many people today identify being a Christian with being a nice person, a good citizen, a periodic churchgoer, and a nondrinker. This shift means that the content and the explanation of the gospel are increasingly important in evangelism.

From death to life. The fourth shift in modern consciousness is the change from a death-orientation to a life-orientation. In premodern society plagues, epidemics, pestilence, and famines kept the life expectancy at thirty-five and made death a constant reality. Corpses were prepared for burial at home. Because of the reality of death, the questions people asked were related to the survival of personal identity and consciousness beyond death. Today much of this has changed. Life expectancy has doubled. Morticians camouflage the reality of death. Reflection on death has lessened. Secularization and pluralization have made people more "immediate" in orientation. The questions people ask today are these: How do you cope with life? How do you make sense out of this life? How do you get along with people? How do you find meaning and purpose? This provides a great opportunity for the church to help individuals find meaning and a satisfying world view through commitment to Christ and to his mission in the world.

From guilt to doubt. Soper suggests that guilt was the major problem in a preacher's audience fifty years ago, but today doubt is the major problem in the audience's consciousness. This does not mean that people cease to be guilty, or that guilt is not a real and common problem. People handle guilt differently—through counseling, encounter groups, or by projection and rationalization. Personal guilt has been minimized. People go to the therapist seeking freedom from guilt feelings, not seeking forgiveness for their guilt. Soper labels this as the "age of dubiety." He suggests that doubt about the validity of Christianity as the remedy for human needs has replaced the guilt question.

How does this affect gospel communication? On the guilt issue, the church must help individuals understand that their alienation from God is real and basic to all other tensions. Modern men and women fail to link this subjective guilt feeling to their objective guilt before God. Another important implication is that people who are guilt-ridden and are conscious of their need for forgiveness are more accessible and respond more readily. However, if doubt is a major obstacle to faith, evangelization is a more difficult and protracted process. The church must find ways of engaging people at their points of conscious doubt, where these can be ventilated and discussed. This was the strategy which Paul employed at Thessalonica,

Athens, and Ephesus (Acts 17:2; 18:4, 19).

From need to curiosity. The sixth shift in persons caused by secularism is the change from a sense of need for Christianity to a sense of curiosity about Christianity and Christians. The question is not whether modern people have needs but whether Christianity is adequate to meet those needs. Secular people do not perceive that Christianity is adequate to meet those needs. Secular people do not perceive that Christianity offers what they need. The rising link is one of perception in regard to the relevance of Christian faith for meeting the deepest human needs. Pluralization places Christianity on the competitive open market of religion. Often what the church models to searching individuals is not peace, forgiveness, reconciliation, and hope, but divisiveness, doctrinal disputes, and a preoccupation with institutional survival. The impact of privatization often means that the Christian response to a given situation differs little from that of non-Christians in similar circumstances. The problem is not that there are fewer needs today, but that people somehow don't perceive Christ and Christianity as the only adequate answers to those needs. Instead people are curious. They ask, "What do Christians believe?" "Does belief make a difference in life?" "Can Christianity change the world?" The challenge to demonstrate the credibility of Christianity rests with the church.

From belonging to alienation. In earlier civilizations where relationships were simple, personal, and direct, people felt a sense of belonging. They were at home in their world. Today people feel alienated and estranged. Soper contends that people feel alienated in the majority of their relationships as a consequence of secular urbanization: (1) Urban people are alienated from nature. They have been estranged and separated from the soil, from the rhythms of life, and from fellow creatures. The shift from the natural world to the asphalt jungle contributes to a sense of rootlessness. (2) People in mass urban society feel alienated from sources of political power. People feel they are victims of government and industry decision makers who only pretend to listen. (3) Urban people are alienated from their neighbors. Whether people live in a gigantic high-rise apartment or in a suburb, they live anonymously and have few personal relationships with their neighbors. The result is that people have no sense of community and no center to their lives.

Since evangelism strategy is determined by the context, the church must be increasingly sensitive to the broader shifts in cultural values and to how these affect the configuration of the gospel in view of the problems of identity, relationships, ignorance, meaninglessness, doubt, curiosity, and alienation.

Implications for God's people building the urban church

Specifically, what impact does the complexion of urban culture and the shift in values have on evangelism strategy? The suggestions which follow are by no means exhaustive but are an attempt to build an evangelism strategy that takes seriously theological content and the urban secularized content.

A strategy emerging from a renewed vision

Renewed vision is not optional if the church is to have an impact on the city. Evangelical churches have been more reluctant to accept the city as the locus of mission than as a locus of education, employment, and residency. Church-planting projections for the 1980s must be aimed at urban centers.

William Temple once described the church as "the only institution in society that exists to serve those who have not yet become its members." The tendency for the church to develop a self-preservation mentality and a private-club atmosphere is ever present. God's people must continually be revitalized in mission. The needs of the city demand the total mobilzation of believers. The institutional church which fails to give evidence of dynamic life, active involvement, and a ministering spirit will not affect the urban scene. Dynamic life and a vision for people are born in an atmosphere of prayer and fasting (Acts 13:1-3). As existing churches are renewed, they can give birth to and support daughter congregations. The discernment of strategic centers in need of a gospel witness must come out of individual and corporate prayer and fasting. Many of our people are mobile because of job and economic patterns. We need **to build vision** among people to relocate in strategic centers for the "sake of the gospel" and to aid the corporate witness of new congregations.

A strategy mobilizing lay people with a Christian world view

According to the American Institute of Church Growth survey, seventy to ninety percent of people who go to church go as a result of primary relationships—friends or relatives. The identity, relational, and belonging needs of urban people call for a strategy of personal involvement. The greatest resource the church has is lay people who in their day-to-day contacts and relationships interpret life from a Christian world view. Our tendency to capsulize, program, and "preachify" the gospel makes little impact in secular society. Too often we set the agenda, define the terms, and control the communication style with little consideration of the interests, needs, or frames of reference of those we are seeking to evangelize. The church's most urgent need is for ordinary people to talk naturally about Christ, life, human values, and crisis situations from a Christian perspective. The question is this: What does the Christian say in nonreligious terms in response to spiraling inflation, accidental death, the threat of war, family tension, school busing and racial integration, fuel shortages, retirement, and mid-life crisis? To speak naturally and normally to these issues requires an integrated world view. It means the gospel must become so much a part of our thinking and world view that privatization also makes Christians schizoid. We relegate religious talk and biblical values to church meetings and conversations with other Christians, but in day-to-day life our application of Christianity to issues becomes remote, stilted, and unnatural.

A strategy using the inductive evangelism approach

Donald Soper has written, "We must begin where people are rather than where we would like them to be." By this he means there must be a point of contact between the gospel and people's needs, hopes, yearnings, fears, longings, and deepest motives. The oft-used deductive approach to evangelism moves from the general to the particular, usually in this form: (1) an announcement of the basics of the gospel message; (2) an assumption that the individual who accepts the gospel will work out the specifics in his or her own life. The deductive approach is more effective when people share a common religious background, orientation, or beliefs, and have some con-

sciousness of needs.

However, in secular society, many do not even link their needs with Christ, the gospel, or Christianity. In such a society the inductive approach which moves from the particular to the general may be more helpful. The inductive approach moves through several stages: (1) establishing a relationship and finding a specific need; (2) sharing a facet of the gospel that is relevant to that need; (3) appeal for commitment to Christ.

This approach calls for deep personal involvement. It means we must learn to understand not only what people want (their goals, values, priorities), but also help them determine that what they need is vitally related to the gospel. Numerous assessment resources can help us discover the underlying needs and drives in a person's life (Maslow 1970; Engel and Norton 1975:44-46; Hunter 1979:56).

The inductive strategy calls for a Holy Spirit sensitivity to people and their situations. For example, people who are in transition are more open to change. This means that persons involved in the following human situations will probably be more open to the gospel and to a church ministry: moving, marriage, birth of a child, job change, divorce, illness, and educational transition—junior high, high school, college, job. Another approach is to ask Christians to pinpoint five persons who are nonchurch-goers and to evaluate their value system so they become conscious of potential stress points. What happens to them when the Corvette is wrecked? Or the spouse walks out with the children? Or the promotion goes to a colleague? These become points at which the gospel can be made relevant to people's needs not only in words but also in actions.

A diverse, flexible, and comprehensive strategy

In a pluralistic urban culture the church must respond to diversity with multiple strategies. The depersonalizing forces of our anonymous society have forced people to regroup around language, cultural, racial, economic, and vocational patterns. Evangelism strategy must reach people where they are in their homogeneous group and help people see that commitment to Christ is a unifying force in the church which runs deeper than kinship or cultural, racial, or socioeconomic ties. For example, Temple Baptist Church is an inner-city congregation which ministers to four different groups—English, Hispanic, Korean, and Chinese (Frenchak 1979:188-193). Each congregation has its own pastor and retains its self-identity as a separate group. The pastoral staff coordinates one joint quarterly worship service, but structurally the organization is not a monolithic giant dictating what all the groups should do.

Target-Group Evangelism outlines one church's response to the needs of a number of different social groups in their community: drug addicts, divorcees, parents of retarded children, international students and immigrants who need to learn English (Neighbour 1977). As a means of fostering primary relationships, building community, assisting individuals in their interests, skills, or need, Neighbour also suggests some human-interest subjects such as personality development, improving your self-image, how to fall in love, and sewing, guitar, or cooking lessons. A number of churches have effectively reached into their communities through direct home Bible studies. The setting is informal; neighbors invite their friends. Social relationships provide the context for discussing the Bible and Christian values.

Evangelicals need a more comprehensive strategy for reaching cities. We need to saturate cities by planting churches geared to reach many different homogeneous groups and areas. Three areas of need stand out: high-rise apartment buildings, family relationships, and inner-city ministries.

High-rise apartment buildings. Due to housing shortages and inflation, the number of apartment dwellers will increase in the future. David Rich has characterized apartment dwellers as anonymity and privacy seekers; extremely mobile; suspicious of institutions, the church included; and rootless. With inflation and rising housing costs, many younger families and older persons have become apartment dwellers for economic rather than escape reasons. While Rich's classifications may seem stereotyped, we have evidence that apartment dwellers have fewer roots and relationships in their immediate environment when compared with single-family dwellers.

What is the church's strategy to reach apartment dwellers? Should we train apartment managers as part of a strategy to penetrate this group? Does the church urge people to give up single dwellings and to locate in apartments for the sake of ministry? My point is that a witness is needed in apartments as well as in single-dwelling suburban neighborhoods.

Family relationships. This is an area of "human hurt" that cuts across all segments of society. I am referring to the whole range of problems affecting families: child abuse, birth control, separation, desertion, divorce and remarriage, child custody, homosexuality, family conflicts. Whether through crisis counseling, natural birth classes, family seminars, or couples conferences, family crisis intervention may be one of the church's greatest opportunities to demonstrate the relevance of the gospel in terms of forgiveness, reconciliation, and wholeness.

Inner-city ministries. The majority of evangelical churches in the city are suburban and basically middle class. The issue is not whether suburbs need churches, but why evangelicals have been able to sustain so few vital inner-city churches. The inner-city church today faces the greatest tensions of all urban ministries.

A strategy which is comprehensive and flexible must face the emerging order in terms of stewardship, church size, church structure, and church facilities. In the early church, buildings and facilities were not the issue because people met in homes. This means that for the first three centuries the church grew without the aid of two of our most prized tools: mass evangelism and evangelism in church buildings. Few of us quarrel with the need for a meeting place or with the fact that owning church property is not inherently wrong. Most of us are conscious of the cultural dimensions of buildings—that they give a group a sense of identity, that they represent greater permanence, and that they are part of people's mindset in describing the church. But as a church-planting strategy, the preoccupation with purchasing facilities or property is a wrong focus. Our primary concern must be quality leaders who build a solid nucleus of believers.

The current model of renting facilities for larger church meetings and gathering in homes for small-group fellowships is probably our best option. In terms of stewardship, strategy, and diminishing world resources, the church may need to forego the luxury of owning its facilities. Several churches are opting for shared facilities, double and triple

services, or for a ministry to different homogeneous groups from the same facility. In Yorba Linda, California, a church of 1,000 is meeting in a school gym without plans for permanent buildings. Recently a church in the San Francisco area acquired a three-year lease on the abandoned school facility. In Palo Alto, California, two pizza parlors are the Sunday morning meeting places for several growing Bible study classes. Storefront facilities are also an option.

The church must always ask this question: How can we most effectively minister to our community? In some cities rental facilities are not available. In other places the church may decide that erecting a moderate, functional facility is the best option. The context, the existing need, and the local group determine facilities. Facility decisions must be owned locally by the existing body and arise out of the focus and needs of their ministry. That is something far different from a strategy of erecting facilities and binding a small group with an enormous debt.

The question of the superchurch model or the multiplication model of sponsoring daughter congregations is controversial. It is not a matter or bigness equals badness and smallness equals goodness. Both models have strengths and weaknesses. A concern for spiritual reproduction and evangelization in either church model is a sign of health. My preference is to start daughter congregations when a church has grown to 250 to 350 members. This model is in keeping with a theology of the church as a discerning fellowship and a discipling community.

Superchurches that are effectively reaching and retaining new people have developed small group fellowships as a means of fostering primary relationships. Size does affect relational dynamics. Individually and corporately, Christians constantly face the challenge of remaining personal and of providing a "warm nest" for new converts. Some superchurches are doing an excellent job. But after evaluating the total thrust, I believe the multiplication of daughter churches is a more functional model.

Paul's message in Romans 1 is a timely reminder for the twentieth century church in a pagan urban culture. Paul's picture is dark in terms of humankind's paganizm, yet full of hope in terms of the relevance of the gospel. The pagan urban environment is also wide open to the gospel. The challenge is for the church to be the church—a loving, ministering people in a broken world.

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Salvation in the Synoptic Gospels

JOHN DRIVER

The concept of salvation which we find in the Gospels is rooted in the prophetic vision of messianic salvation. From the beginning the Evangelists presented the messianic mission of Jesus in terms of salvation. The terms translated "Savior," "to save," and "salvation" occur principally in Luke, but all the Gospels are in fundamental agreement on this point.

The song of Mary begins with the words, "My soul magnifies the Lord, and my spirit rejoices in God my **Savior**" (Lk 1:47). This expresses the biblical conviction that the God of Israel, who manifests himself most clearly in the Messiah, is above all a God who saves.

The father of John the Baptist celebrated the saving event which is upon God's people: "Blessed be the Lord God of Israel, for he has visited and redeemed his people, and has raised up a horn of **salvation** for us in the house of his servant David . . . that we should be **saved** . . . being delivered from the hand of our enemies" (Lk 1:68,69,71,74). Further, the mission of the Baptist will be to "go before the Lord to prepare his ways, to give knowledge of **salvation** to his people in the forgiveness of their sins, through the tender mercy of our God . . . to guide our feet into the way of peace" (1:76b-78a, 79b). The combination of terms in this passage (salvation, forgiveness of sins, mercy, and peace) furnishes us with a preview of the holistic concept of salvation which the Gospels present.

In the birth narrative Luke again underscored the saving role of the Messiah. "Be not afraid; for behold, I bring you good news [I evangelize you] of great joy which will come to all the people; for to you is born this day in the city of David a **Savior,** who is Christ the Lord" (2:10,11). This configuration of ideas is suggestive: Evangel, Savior, Christ (Messiah), and Lord.

In his version of the birth narrative, Matthew reported, "She will bear a son, and you shall call his name Jesus, for he will **save** his people from their sins" (1:21). In its Hebrew form, "Jesus" means God helps or God saves. In contrast with other texts where the primary meaning of messianic salvation seems to be depicted in social and even political terms, it is presented here in spiritual and moral terms as salvation from sins. However, these visions are not mutually exclusive.

Simeon, symbol of the righteous and devout among God's people, "blessed God and said, 'Lord, now lettest thou thy servant depart in peace, according to thy word; for mine eyes have seen thy **salvation** which thou hast prepared in the presence of all peoples, a light for revelation to the Gentiles, and for glory to thy people Israel' " (Lk 2:25, 29-32). It is difficult to imagine a clearer

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statement of the Evangelist's intention: that universal salvation is found in Jesus the Messiah.

We find the same clarity in the way in which Luke introduced the preaching of John the Baptist with a reference to Isaiah 40:3-5. While the Old Testament text says, "And the glory of the Lord shall be revealed, and all flesh shall see it together," Luke's somewhat free version leaves no doubt about his understanding of the nature of the messianic mission: "And all flesh shall see the **salvation** of God" (3:6).

To affirm that the Gospels present the messianic mission of Jesus in terms of salvation does not necessarily mean that the nature of this salvation is generally understood. While the Evangelists offer a surprisingly concrete and full-orbed vision of messianic salvation, Christians' understanding through the centuries has often been deficient. In fact, the history of the church is the story of extraneous influences which have repeatedly contributed to the modification and the domestication of the biblical meaning of salvation. As a result of this, we rarely find Christian communities with radically biblical **practices and doctrines** of salvation. A fresh approach to the messianic mission from the Evangelists' perspective may serve to reorient our practices and enrich our understanding of biblical salvation.

The messianic mission in the Gospels

Each of the Synoptic Gospels introduces the messianic mission of Jesus with a summary preview of the form which his ministry will take. This synthetic introduction follows immediately after the temptation narrative. The Synoptic Gospels will report the messianic commission of Jesus in the context of his baptism. Then follows the temptation narrative which raises the fundamental question: What kind of Messiah is Jesus going to be? Jesus rejected the temptation to be a Messiah with an economic program designed merely to provide bread for his followers. He also turned down the temptation to be a thaumaturge, a miracle worker whose wonders supposedly accredit his messianic pretentions. And finally, he refused the Zealot temptation to establish himself as Messiah by the presumably justifiable use of force. In this way the Evangelists make clear that Jesus' saving mission **does not** include these alternatives.

At this point the three Evangelists introduce their synthetic summaries, anticipations of the messianic role which Jesus later fulfilled. These are key passages for understanding the Evangelists' perspective of the Messianic mission of Jesus.

Matthew 4:17-23

Mission of salvation. Jesus began his messianic ministry by announcing the arrival of a new era: "Repent, for the kingdom of heaven is at hand" (4:17). The perfect tense of the Greek verb implies that this kingdom is already in the midst of humankind. This calls for repentance, that is, a radical conversion of values because the values of the kingdom inaugurated by the Messiah are altogether different. Although Matthew did not employ the term "salvation" in this context, one receives the impression that messianic salvation is to be found in this kingdom. The Evangelists insisted in their introductions that the mission of the Messiah is salvation. In his summary preview, Matthew described that mission in terms of "the gospel of the kingdom." The implication is clear. There is a direct relationship between this kingdom and the salvation which Jesus brings.

Community of salvation. Jesus continued his messianic mission by forming a community of people who left their occupations and followed him (4:18-22). They literally began to live in communion with their Lord. This community began with four men, but soon included twelve. The number is significant, because it identifies them as the true Israel, the new messianic people of God. Here again, it is implied that to participate in the new messianic community is to experience messianic salvation. Matthew placed the Sermon on the Mount in this context. It is a summary description of the values by which life is lived in the community of salvation.

Wholeness of salvation. Matthew concluded his summary by pointing to the healing ministry of Jesus: "And he went about all Galilee . . . preaching the gospel of the kingdom and healing every disease and every infirmity among the people" (4:23). This activity clearly identifies Jesus as Messiah according to the prophetic vision of the Suffering Servant of Yahweh. To heal the sick is to fulfill the prophetic vision. "This was to fulfill what was spoken by the prophet Isaiah, 'He took our infirmities and bore our diseases' " (8:17). Here again the idea is implied that to be healed by the Messiah is to somehow participate in his salvation. In fact, the Greek verb "to save" is employed some fifteen times in the Synoptic Gospels to describe how the sick are healed and the demon-possessed are freed. Although this use of the verb for cases of physical sickness and demon possession seems strange to us (in the Revised Standard Version the verb is generally translated "to make well" or "to heal"), it apparently responded to the intentions of the Evangelists. To be healed in the community of the Servant of Yahweh is, in effect, to be saved. The words of Jesus directed to the woman with the chronic hemorrhage are suggestive: "Daughter, your faith has made you well [has saved you]; go in peace and be healed of your disease" (Mk 5:34). To be healed by Jesus was more than the mere correction of a physical defect. It was a matter of a new relationship in the community of the Messiah. We note that Jesus directed practically the same words to the harlot in Luke 7:49,50: "Your sins are forgiven. Your faith has saved you; go in peace." In the community of the Messiah, salvation means wholeness—physical as well as spiritual and moral.

Mark 1:14-18

Messianic arrival. Mark also began his summary with the messianic announcement of the arrival of the new era. "Jesus came into Galilee, preaching the gospel of God, and saying, 'The time is fulfilled, and the kingdom of God is at hand; repent and believe in the gospel' " (1:14,15). The logic of this text leads one to think that messianic salvation is to be found in the kingdom of God, since the Messiah has come to save. The implications of these verses are evident.

"The time is fulfilled." The *kairos* of God has arrived with the appearance of the Messiah. This is the decisive hour in the history of salvation. The hope of God's people is now being realized.

The content of the gospel is not a new theology, a new doctrine about God. It is rather a new event—the arrival of the kingdom. The perfect tense of the Greek verb translated "is at hand" indicates that the reality of the kingdom

is already present as a consequence of what God has done. Messianic salvation is to be found in this kingdom.

The references to "gospel" and "kingdom (or reign) of God" in this text seem to be an allusion to Isaiah 52:7:

How beautiful upon the mountains
are the feet of him who brings good tidings,
who publishes peace,
who brings good tidings of good,
who publishes salvation,
who says to Zion, "Your God reigns."

In this light the Markan statement becomes even more daring. Jesus is the fulfillment of the prophetic announcement, "Your God reigns." The poetic parallelism in the prophetic text further illuminates our search for the meaning of salvation. To bring good tidings, to publish salvation, and to announce the reign of God are all synonymous expressions.

Repentance and faith are inseparable from the gospel of the kingdom. Life in the kingdom of God requires a reorientation of values, attitudes, will, and ethics which permits us, by the grace of God, to participate in the salvation of the new era.

Messianic community. In his summary preview Mark also described the beginnings of the messianic community (1:16-20). That salvation is experienced in this community is again implied. Messianic salvation is communal.

Messianic liberation. The messianic authority of Jesus is demonstrated in his teachings (1:22), but especially in his exorcisms (1:27). Here also, the messianic mission of Jesus manifests itself in his healing activity and in his authority over the evil spirits. People experience salvation and liberation in the community of the Servant Messiah.

Luke 4:16-22a

Luke presented his summary preview of the messianic mission in the form of a quotation from Isaiah 61:1,2 which Jesus declared had been fulfilled in him:

The Spirit of the Lord is upon me
Because he has anointed me to preach good news to the poor.
He has sent me to proclaim release to the captives
And recovering of sight to the blind,
To set at liberty those who are oppressed,
To proclaim the acceptable year of the Lord.

Jubilee mission of Messiah. Jesus identified himself with the Servant of Yahweh whose mission is the restoration of the divine order. In all probability, the phrase with which Jesus concluded his reading, "to proclaim the acceptable year of the Lord," is an allusion to the Jubilee described in Leviticus 25 and Deuteronomy 15:

On the day of atonement you shall send abroad the trumpet throughout all your land. And you shall hallow the fiftieth year, and proclaim liberty throughout the land to all its inhabitants; it shall be a jubilee for you, when each of you shall return to his property and each of you shall return to his family (Lev 25:9b-10).

The Year of Jubilee was God's provision for the correction of injustices which accumulated among his people due to human selfishness. A series of provisions characterized it which contributed to the restoration of life together within God's covenant community according to his will.

The land was to lie fallow, not merely for ecological reasons, but to remind people that the land belongs to Yahweh and it is his provision for feeding the poor among his people.

Debts were to be forgiven. The basis for this provision was the fact that "the Lord's release has been proclaimed." Indebtedness is forgiven among the people of God because God is a forgiving God.

Slaves among the Israelites who had been obliged to sell their services because of economic hardship were to be freed. The reason for this provision lay in the fact that Yahweh had redeemed his people from bondage.

Inheritances which had been lost due to economic hardship were to be returned to the original owners or their descendants. This provision was based on Yahweh's ownership of the land.

The provisions of Jubilee were among the clearest manifestations of God's intention for life together among his covenant people. And, according to Luke, the messianic mission of Jesus has to do with a radical return to those social conditions which conform to the divine intention. The ancient Jubilee provisions anticipated messianic salvation in a limited—but nonetheless real—sense. Clearly, messianic salvation is more than a mere restoration of Jubilee. It is greater because of the presence of the Messiah, God's ultimate Word for humankind, and because the Holy Spirit is present in the midst of God's people. But we should remember that messianic salvation is **more and not less** than the intention of God expressed in the ancient Jubilee. With some noteworthy exceptions, the history of the Christian church is the story of a salvation which has generally been considerably weaker than the intention of God expressed in the ancient Jubilee provisions.

Good news mission of Messiah. Preaching good news to the poor is essential to the messianic mission of Jesus. This forms part of the answer to John the Baptist's question about whether Jesus was really the Messiah (Lk 7:22). Luke would have us understand that evangelizing the poor is messianic activity **par excellence.** But who are these poor?

In the Greek text, "poor" is used without a definite article. Rather than referring to poor people in particular, it points to a quality or condition of poorness which characterizes people. The term poor in the Gospels includes a much wider group than those who lack necessary material goods, although these are certainly included. The category of people which Jesus called the poor included all of those whom Jesus' enemies called tax collectors and sinners, harlots, little ones, or unlearned ones. This category also included the blind, lame, leprous, deaf, and sick. It included those in despised professions: money lenders, tax collectors, shepherds. In short, it included all those of doubtful reputation and low esteem, the uncultured and uneducated whose religious ignorance and dubious morality closed to them the possibility of salvation, according to the prevailing opinion. For example, Zacchaeus, "a chief tax collector and rich," would have been included in this category. According to the Gospels, the messianic mission of Jesus was essentially sharing the good news of the kingdom of God with these poor.

Saving mission of Messiah. "To proclaim release to the captives and recovering of sight to the blind, [and] to set at liberty those who are oppressed" are phrases which summarize the saving mission of the Messiah according to the prophetic vision of the Suffering Servant of Yahweh (see Is 42:7; *et. al.*).

To "proclaim release" and "set at liberty" are evident

allusions to the activity of the herald who proclaimed the Jubilee. In fact, the Greek verbs translated "proclaim," "release," and "set at liberty," are the same terms the Greek version of the Old Testament employs in those texts which describe the release of the Year of Jubilee.

The prophetic oracle abounds in metaphor, and it is difficult to distinguish clearly which terms should be interpreted literally and which should be understood in a figurative sense. However, all of these terms clearly point toward one central idea: the full-orbed salvation of the people of God which is both material and spiritual, individual and social. According to the Evangelist, the ancient Jubilee, with its forms for restoring peace and righteousness among the people of God, is a paradigm of the messianic salvation which has come in Jesus.

Messianic salvation in the Gospels

This Lukan summary helps us understand the nature of messianic salvation from the Evangelist's perspective. In this light, the Sermon on the Plain becomes more comprehensible. The blessings and the woes (6:20-26) take on meaning when we remember that messianic salvation takes Jubilean forms. Those who in an unjust society have been poor, hungry, uncomfortable, and reviled are the ones who in the new era of messianic salvation will experience blessedness. In contrast, for the rich, the opulent, the powerful and unrepentant magnates, the Jubilee of messianic salvation means not blessing but judgment. Those who participate in this messianic salvation lend to those in need without expecting anything in return (6:30,35); they love without discrimination because that is precisely the way God loves (6:27,28,35); they are merciful and ready to forgive, because that is the way God is (6:36,37); they share generously with others (6:38).

To be forgiven by God is normal in the messianic community, "for we ourselves forgive everyone who is indebted to us" (11:4). Here we note that the Greek verb translated "forgive" is the same term which the Septuagint employs to refer to the cancellation of debts and the release of those whose indebtedness has virtually reduced them to bondage.

From this perspective the warning that "a man's life does not consist in the abundance of his possessions" seems logical (12:15), because in the community of messianic salvation we depend on our Father for all that we need (12:22-32). Messianic salvation is not utopic, because in the community of the Messiah, life is lived according to the spirit of Jubilee where goods are shared liberally (12:33,34).

In contrast to all secular salvations, messianic salvation is charismatic. It depends exclusively on the grace of the heavenly Father who stands ready to give the Holy Spirit to all who ask (11:13).

The narrative of the rich ruler, included in each of the Synoptic Gospels, is essential for understanding the concept of salvation found in Scripture. In fact, this passage becomes fully comprehensible only when one sees messianic salvation as a new and fuller manifestation of the spirit and forms of Jubilee.

The ruler began by asking, "What shall I do to inherit eternal life?" Jesus suggested that he live according to the intention of God described in the provisions of the Mosiac Covenant. When the man replied that he had always tried to observe God's law, Jesus insisted that he share his possessions in the spirit of the Jubilee and participate in the new life of the messianic community ("Come, follow me"). The man's response was negative, apparently because he was unwilling to act according to the spirit of Jubilee. Jesus' comment, in light of his decision, was, "How hard it is for those who have riches to enter the kingdom of God!" The figure of the camel and the eye of the needle simply underscores the realism of Jesus' evaluation of the rich.

The disciples' question, "Who then can be saved?" (note the use of the term in this particular context!) reflects human surprise in the face of the values which characterize the kingdom of God. Instead of speculating about whether it is possible for the rich to be saved, Jesus insisted that God alone is capable of producing the kind of conversion which is absolutely indispensable. The narrative concludes with the observation that the followers of Jesus who practice the spirit of Jubilee will enjoy the blessings of messianic salvation in the present as well as in the future.

This story provides valuable insights into the concept of salvation reflected in the Synoptic Gospels. First, it contains a series of terms for salvation which are apparently synonymous: "inherit (or have) eternal life," "enter life," "be perfect," "follow [Jesus]," "enter the kingdom of God," and "be saved." In light of the wide range of meaning which these terms contribute to our understanding of salvation, some of the distinctions the theologians of the church have made in their definitions of salvation throughout the centuries need to be questioned.

Second, viewing the narrative from this perspective helps us understand other texts which tell us that one cannot be a disciple of Jesus apart from the conversion made possible by the Spirit of Christ manifesting itself in a spirit and practice of Jubilee. "So therefore, whoever of you does not renounce all that he has cannot be my disciple." "No servant can serve two masters." "You cannot serve God and mammon" (Lk 14:33; 16:13). "To be saved" is void of meaning apart from the context of messianic salvation with its spirit and forms.

The story of the conversion of Zacchaeus (Lk 19:1-10) is also important for our understanding of salvation in the Gospels. In fact, this is the only place in the Synoptic Gospels where Jesus himself used the word "salvation." Zacchaeus is an example of the poor to whom Jesus brought good news. The conclusion of the paragraph confirms once more the fact that the Messiah's mission is salvation: "For the Son of man came to seek and to save the lost" (19:10).

The values which reflect the spirit of Jubilee and characterize the messianic community occupy a prominent place in the narrative. Transformed by the contagious Spirit of the Messiah, Zacchaeus became generous, making restitution—far beyond the requirements of the law of Moses—for the money which he had gotten through fraud, and sharing his goods with the poor. Salvation in this case apparently meant a new life of Jubilee in the messianic community. Thus Zacchaeus became a true son of Abraham. This contrast between the rich ruler and Zacchaeus will scarcely go unnoticed. Luke set the joy of Zacchaeus over against the sadness of the rich ruler.

The saving death of Jesus

Although the Synoptic Gospels do not develop the concept fully, they state clearly that the death of Jesus on behalf of

sinners is for our salvation. Both Matthew and Mark reported that "the Son of man came not to be served but to serve, and to give his life as a ransom for many."

First, we observe that this text appears in the context of the petition of the sons of Zebedee and is employed in support of the values which characterized the messianic community. If vicarious and sacrificial service is the form which the life of God's Messiah takes, then the dominant system of values is inverted and true lordship is manifested as servanthood.

This text also implies that the vicarious death of Jesus must be understood from the perspective of the prophetic vision of the Suffering Servant of Yahweh. This, rather than Anselm's theory of legal satisfaction, is the key to the interpretation of our text. The term "even as," with which the verse begins, makes it clear that Jesus' life and death function as a **model** for his followers. Furthermore, the primary meaning of the Greek preposition at the end of verse 28, translated "for many," is "over against" or "face to face," which underscores the fact that Jesus' life is a model for our lives rather than **simply** being offered as a substitute. Jesus in his life and death is the prototype of what we are to be. A close relationship exists between Jesus' life and his death "as a ransom for many." In the Gospels **both** the life and death of the Messiah are for our salvation.

This is also the perspective from which we should interpret the passion narratives which occupy such an important place in all of the Gospels. The enthusiastic multitudes unknowingly established the scenario for this final act in the drama of salvation when they acclaimed Jesus: "Hosanna to the Son of David! . . . "Hosanna in the highest!" (Mt 21:9). Hosanna is an exclamation which means save us or liberate us. The first act in the drama which unfolds in the Gospels presents the saving life of the Messiah. Now, the theme of the second act is announced: the saving death of the Messiah.

On the occasion of the Last Supper with his disciples, Jesus again interpreted his imminent death from the perspective of the prophetic vision of Isaiah 53 as vicarious and representative: "This is my blood of the covenant, which is poured out for many for the forgiveness of sins" (Mt 26:28).

Although they surely refer to the immediate danger of death which Jesus was facing, the mocking words hurled at Jesus on the cross hold profound and ironic truth: "He saved others; he cannot save himself." This implies that the salvation of humanity costs no less than the life of the Son of God.

In each of the Gospels, the second act in the drama of messianic salvation culminated in the resurrection. To overrate the importance of the resurrection is scarcely possible. Without it there would be no messianic salvation in the full-orbed New Testament sense of the term. To "walk in newness of life" becomes a human possibility in the light of the resurrection of the Messiah.

Each of the Gospels offers its particular version of the Great Commission which Jesus gave to his disciples in order that messianic salvation might become a reality among all nations. In Matthew we are told that by virtue of Jesus' cosmic Lordship, his followers are to make disciples according to the pattern which he had established. In Mark, the gospel proclamation culminates in the salvation of all who believe.

Messianic salvation: radical

Salvation in the Gospels is messianic. It is wrought by Jesus, the Suffering Servant of Yahweh, both by his life and by his death. This salvation is found in the context of the messianic community. It is global, touching every facet of human existence and transcending all barriers. The witness of the Gospels leads us to confess joyfully that in the Christ of the incarnation and the parousia, in the One who came and who is coming, we find salvation in all of its richness.

The vision of salvation which we find in the Gospels is far more radical than most of us have generally imagined. It brings with it an inversion of values which literally overturns the presuppositions of all other salvations, be they the secular versions of our time, or the religious varieties which perpetuate themselves under the auspices of the Christian tradition. Jesus underscored the radically counter-current nature of messianic salvation with a paradoxical saying which the Evangelists repeat six times: "For whoever would save his life will lose it; and whoever loses his life for my sake and the gospel's will save it."

Chronicle

Mennonite Missionary Study Fellowship
March 6-7, 1980, Elkhart, Indiana
Theme: EVANGELISM IN A NEOPAGAN SOCIETY

Some ninety people, including missions administrators, missionaries, professors, and students, participated in the tenth Mennonite Missionary Study Fellowship (MMSF) on the campus of Associated Mennonite Biblical Seminaries (AMBS), Elkhart, Indiana, March 6-7, 1980.

The purpose of the MMSF is to bring together scholars, leaders from the Mennonite mission agencies, and missionaries especially interested in the theological dimensions of mission to do in-depth study of the meaning and role of evangelism today. MMSF is sponsored by the Institute of Mennonite Studies (IMS), 3003 Benham Avenue, Elkhart, IN 46514, and is directed by Willard Swartley.

The MMSF theme this year was **Evangelism in a Neopagan Society**, and Alfred C. Krass served as resource person. Krass is a former missionary to Ghana and is now a member of Jubilee Fellowship in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania. While in Africa, Krass developed and prepared literature for an adult literacy program and helped to train lay leaders as a component in evangelistic work.

Krass is currently employed as a free-lance speaker, writer, and workshop leader and as Associate Editor of *The Other Side* magazine. He is a minister of the United Church of Christ and chairs the United Church Philadelphia Association's Long Range Planning Committee.

Krass gave four addresses at the conference, followed by responses and questions:

What the Church has Learned about Evangelism in the Last Decade
Responses by John I. Smucker, Elkhart, Indiana; and David A. Shank, Abidjan, Ivory Coast

Neopagan Society of the Western World
Response by Roelf S. Kuitse, Elkhart, Indiana

Evangelism in the Bible
Response by Jake Elias, Elkhart, Indiana

Communicating the Gospel to a Neopagan Society
Responses by M. Hershey Leaman, Landisville, Pennsylvania; Jóse Ortiz, Elkhart, Indiana; Henry Schmidt, Fresno, California; Hector Valencia, Newton, Kansas; and Chester Wenger, Lancaster, Pennsylvania

Several central assertions emerged as Krass attempted to lay a conceptual and theological base for the work of Christian evangelism in contemporary society. One such focus related to his experience as a missionary in Africa.

Self-understanding for American missionaries in the sixties, said Krass, was that they came from a "secular" society to one not yet "desacralized," from a "progressive, developed" society to a "stationary, undeveloped" one. Krass' own learning during the African experience and his adjustment upon return to the West helped him discover that not all was secular in the West. Rather, gods of many sorts controlled the lives of Western people—a neopaganism.

Another key statement by Krass was his analysis of Western neopagan society. Its neopaganism is its manipulation of power in politics and economics, its popular religions and cults, and its culture of narcissism. These, he said, are manifestations of self-hatred and alienation and are idolatry.

What then is the fundamental function of evangelism in this type of society? Krass spoke of "kingdom evangelism," that is, to name the evils of our society and thereby get freedom from them.

The Krass lectures will be available in book form, a volume that will become part of the Missionary Studies Series, a related IMS project.

Willard Swartley moderated the MMSF sessions. In other sessions, Theron Schlabach, professor of Goshen (Indiana) College featured his new book, *Gospel Versus Gospel,* which traces the history of Mennonite Church missions through World War II. AMBS professor Roelf S. Kuitse and Mennonite Board of Missions Overseas Secretary Wilbert R. Shenk reviewed missiological literature of the past decade.—Mark Wenger

Mark Wenger is a student at Associated Mennonite Biblical Seminaries.

MISSION FOCUS

Thirty-five articles which appeared in *Mission Focus* 1972-78 now in one 488-page volume. Articles discuss biblical and theological bases for mission, mission in the context of many world situations, and strategies and policies for mission. Published by Herald Press. Released in August 1980. $11.95 ($13.85 in Canada). Available from your bookstore or from Herald Press, 616 Walnut Avenue, Scottdale, PA 15683.

In review

Discipling the City: Theological Reflections on Urban Missions. Edited by Roger S. Greenway. Grand Rapids, Michigan: Baker Book House, 1979, 278 pp., $5.95 (pb)

Reviewed by Leland D. Harder

The hunch of this reviewer is that the title of a book is usually selected with a view to selling it, and that its subtitle is the more reliable description of its contents. Certainly this book is not about discipling the city in the sense of doing it or even thinking about how to do it. It is rather concerned with more basic conceptual issues of urban missions in a global perspective.

All nine authors of this collection of essays are or have been missionaries in such countries as Korea, Japan, Ceylon, Sri Lanka, Mexico, Nigeria, Argentina, and Indonesia. Moreover, all but one belong to the Reformed branch of the church and write within that theological context, although several do so with an explicit appreciation for Anabaptist views. In fact, Harvie Conn, who contributed the first and last essays comprising forty percent of the book, commends a "posture [that represents] the best of two worlds, Reformed and Anabaptist" (p. 274), but the book still ends with a clear preference for a Calvinist model "that God can and should be served in all the cultures and occupations of the city" (p. 278).

In addition to its Calvinist presuppositions, Conn identifies the stance of all the writers as "evangelical" vis-à-vis "liberal" or "ecumenical" or "neo-orthodox" or "liberation theology," but he argues fervently for an integration "between evangelism and social involvement, between evangelism and Christian discipleship, evangelism and church renewal" (p. 259). He quotes such Mennonite writers as John H. Yoder, H. S. Bender, Robert Friedmann, and Robert Ramseyer, but is led in the end to reject not only the "Christ-against-the-city" model of sixteenth century Anabaptism (pp. 23-24), which Yoder would argue is not an accurate definition of the Anabaptist vision, but also the neo-Anabaptist "Christ-and-the-city-in-paradox" model of such contemporary radical evangelicals as Jim Wallis (editor of *Sojourners*), William Stringfellow, and John H. Yoder whom Conn describes as "a prophet of the "radical-evangelical" school [who] is not always a prophet held in honor in his Anabaptist hometown" (p. 273) in favor of an "alternative model" from the reformed tradition" (p. 277).

Conn's comprehensive analysis of the history of the city-church dialogue, using Richard Niebuhr's *Christ and Culture* typology, is breathtaking and masterful. Beginning with the classical Graeco-Roman heritage, he moves through three millenia of conceptualizations of the city—**Cosmopolis** (the deification of the city in ancient Greek and Roman writings), **Theopolis** (the *corpus Christianum* marriage of church and city of Augustine and Aquinas), and **Megalopolis** (the post-Reformation collapse of Theopolis resulting now in the "secular city" affirmations of Harvey Cox. Within a more distinctly biblical perspective, he chronicles such themes as **Eden,** the fulfiller of the Creation paradise; **Babylon,** the city of fallen humanity; **Jerusalem,** the city of covenant; **Jerusalem,** the city of the broken covenant; and the **New Jerusalem,** the city of eschatological fulfillment.

Today, or course, we are living in the Jerusalem of broken covenant with the promise of victory in the coming New Jerusalem. In Conn's view, this should lead us to affirm Niebuhr's "Christ-the-transformer-of-the-city" model of the Reformed tradition, in preference to the "Christ-of-the-city" model currently exemplified in the formulations of the World Council of Churches and the International Missionary Council, the "Christ-against-the-city" model currently exemplified by the "separatist fundamentalism" and dispensationalist "open fundamentalism" approaches, and the "Christ-and-the-city-in-paradox" model currently represented by the new "radical evangelicals" already identified above.

"From the Anabaptist heritage," Conn writes, this latter model "links itself to the themes of 'a radical faithfulness to the point of suffering and a community whose obedience to the gospel of the kingdom turned them into a servant people willing to accept a minority status in the world' " (p. 273, Conn quoting Wallis). While affirming that "we are all Anabaptists in our common opposition to Constantinianism" (p. 273), Conn faults the neo-Anabaptists for their lack of an adequate sense of mission to the urban masses and their lack of hope for the redemption of the city, whose powers and principalities have already been vanquished by the Lord of the church (p. 275).

Essays on "Urbanization and Salvation [of the city]," "Church Structures for Urban Mission," "The Whole Christ for the Whole City," "Pilgrimage Toward the House Church," "The Role of the Laity in Urban Evangelization," "Family, Clan, and Tribe in the City," "Theological Education for Urban Mission," and "The Role of the Diaconate in Urban Mission" comprise the rest of the volume.

Guy's essay on the house church is an excellent synthesis of Reformed and Anabaptist concepts of mission strategy. Guy discusses five advantages of house church strategy for reaching the masses: the space is readily available, the emphasis is more clearly on people, it is more clearly intergenerational, the role of the father-figure is functional for leadership, and the ministries are more generally shared.

Several of the other essays are either so esoteric in language or theoretical in content as to be mostly irrelevant to the reading needs of lay Christians. For instance, the following sentence by Kromminga, author of the essay on the role of the laity, defies comprehension: "It will be necessary to keep in mind that the ultimate purpose of the ultimate is to reestablish what is methodologically penultimate as that which is substantially part of God's ultimate concern: that every aspect and function in His creation be renewed under His gracious lordship" (p. 137).

All but one of the authors are seminary professors; and one gets the impression that they are mostly talking to each other. The book is rewarding reading, though it is more difficult to read than it needs to be.

Leland Harder is on a three-year leave from Associated Mennonite Biblical Seminaries to help establish the St. Louis Mennonite Fellowship in St. Louis, Missouri.

How Churches Grow in an Urban World. By Francis M. Dubose. Nashville: Broadman Press, 1978, 181 pp., $5.95

Reviewed by James R. Nikkel

Francis M. Dubose leaves no doubt about the object of this book. He is attempting to speak to four areas where he feels church-growth literature has not adequately spoken; these are church growth in urban perspective, a balanced theology of growth, a comprehensive strategy, and growth for transitional churches. Presumably Dubose is expecting to bring a better balance with his 181-page book. While he speaks positively and quotes generously from a wide range of church-growth writings, he has some concerns about the church-growth theories

which he conceives to be an "anthropological pragmatism with a kind of biblical rational surrounding it." The book divides into the four church-growth inadequacies sections mentioned above.

In his discussion on the urban world, Dubose certainly manages to introduce the reader to urban-world terminology not commonly found in church-growth literature. He describes the city from the center outward, as moving from urbia to suburbia to exurbia to rurbia, each having its own geography and mentality. To help the reader understand the matrix of the city, he discusses the urban scenario by contrasting the urban and rural communication and relationship patterns.

In the second part of the book, Dubose attempts to recapture the biblical city models by tracing the city routes of Paul, the church planter, with an attempt at noting the church-growth principles. From the biblical time he jumps to an analysis of the more recent urban congregation styles and types and manages to go well beyond the analysis seen in church-growth literature heretofore.

In the third section of the book, Dubose seeks to build a theology of the city by striking a balance between Jacques Ellul's negative view of the city and Harvey Cox's totally positive view of the city. He describes the city as a mixed blessing of being both a maker and breaker of civilization. Dubose's urban theology is clearly heterogeneous, which stands in sharp contrast to the homogeneous unit principle of McGavran and Wagner. At times, his attempt at building a theological case for heterogeneity seems to be an over-reaction to the homogeneous-unit principle.

The author concludes his book by suggesting a comprehensive church-growth strategy. He argues for an ideal style he calls the "base-satellite church," which combines the church model with small-group programming. Dubose is almost too optimistic about inner-city renewal and new growth. Nevertheless, he does offer a fine set of guidelines for the urban spiritual entrepreneur.

The book in some instances is a challenge to the church-growth literature and in some ways makes a good contribution to it. The book deserves reading, particularly for its urban vision and insight.

James R. Nikkel is director of Manitoba Mennonite Brethren church extension and has been instrumental in church planting in Manitoba towns and cities.

Christ and Violence. By Ronald J. Sider. Scottdale, Pennsylvania: Herald Press, 1979, 108 pp., $4.95 (pb)

Reviewed by Urbane Peachey

The nonresistant or pacifist conscience has always been a trifle uneasy about being too passive in the face of evil and injustice. "Turning the other cheek," nonresistance to a person who is evil (Matt 5 and Rom 12), and following a suffering Lord have translated into a passive silence in the face of oppression and injustice. Peace-minded Christians have been legitimately ambivalent about the appropriate uses of power. But as often happens, the so-called peace churches have made their case for nonresistance with passages that support treasured ideology; other unsettling passages have tended to be bypassed.

Ronald J. Sider deals with the larger perspective—the biblical concern for justice; Jesus' inauguration of the messianic jubilee, of which the cleansing of the temple was a part; Jesus' strong words to the religious leaders of his day; and his protest (Jn 18) when a soldier struck his cheek at his trial. The chapter titles identify well the orientation of the book: "The Cross and Violence," "Christ and Power," "Peacemaking and Economics," and "Walking in the Resurrection in a Violent World." The content of the book was first delivered in New Call to Peacemaking conferences of 1976.

Christ and Violence is one of the few books that makes a direct connection between a biblical commitment to nonviolence and the domination of modern societies by violent structures that bear the facade of innocent benevolence. Sider quotes Jacques Ellul at length: *I maintain that all kinds of violence are the same . . . the violence of the soldier who kills, the revolutionary who assassinates; it is true also of economic violence—the violence of the privileged proprietor against his workers, of the "haves" against the "have-nots"; the violence done in international economic relations between our societies and those of the third world; the violence done through powerful corporations which exploit the resources of a country that is unable to defend itself* (pp. 68-69).

He goes on to observe that given the place peace churches have taken in society, we are forced to conclude that *we are involved in murder by privilege. Unfortunately it is not true that our society's wealth is simply the result of God's blessing and hard work. To a significant extent, our affluence depends on unjust economic structures that make us rich and Latin Americans hungry* (p. 69).

Sider uses a penetrating biblical searchlight to get into critical corners too easily darkened by conventional cliches. There is no empty liberalism or stuffy religion in this book. The thrust of the book arises out of serious biblical commitment. "There is not the slightest hint of any realm where the disciple is not bound by the words of Jesus," he quotes from Eduard Schweitzer (p. 26).

The principalities and powers, disarmed by Christ, include philosophy, human tradition, and sociopolitical structures as well as unseen spiritual forces that help shape human structures.

Let those who wish to debate Sider's economics do so, but it would be a tragedy if they would miss the spiritual lesson contained between these covers. The author is dealing with economic oppression and exploitation as sin, whatever the economic theory.

The book concludes with a refreshing challenge to live and walk nonviolently in the resurrection. There is no empty expectation that redemption may be found in new social structures. There is no naive optimism that forgets the cross. The final word appears in the reality of the resurrection. From this foundation the author concludes: "Sisters and brothers, if we are to be faithful to Christ and our heritage of peacemaking, we must confront the terrible reality of systemic injustice.

Mission and the Peace Witness. Edited by Robert L. Ramseyer. Scottdale, Pennsylvania: Herald Press, 1979, 141 pp., $4.95 (pb)

Reviewed by Urbane Peachey

Church leaders in overseas Mennonite and Brethren in Christ churches are asking why there was limited attention to peace and justice in the missionary proclamation of the gospel. Robert Ramseyer, editor of this volume, observes that "with few exceptions, Mennonite churches founded by Mennonite missionaries . . . lack a distinctive peace witness. They are in almost all essentials like churches founded by evangelical Protestant missionaries from Europe and North America." Mennonites,

with other Christians, are struggling to find ways of relating the Bible to social injustice. But too much of the struggle goes on in the form of abstractions. The search goes on without a holistic conception of the gospel. Biblical interpretation tends to be inhibited by personalistic orientation that excludes moral and ethical witness in the larger social and national order. Faithfulness to the message leads to an unsettling encounter with the internal affairs of the nation. Action is paralyzed by the concern to remain apolitical, but we have discovered inaction can also be political.

Ramseyer is looking for a correction of that history. He declares, "We will want to make far more clear than we have in the past that there is no such thing as a faithful disciple of Jesus Christ who does not follow Him in the Way of peace." The theological foundation for this commitment is ably stated by seven church leaders and theologians in this volume. They attempt to demonstrate how an evangelistic and peace emphasis can be kept together in the mission of the church.

Marlin E. Miller, drawing heavily on the reconciliation theme of Ephesians 2, emphasizes that "the messianic peace encompasses both the reconciliation of enemies [Jew and Gentile] on the social level as well as the common access to the presence of God." Sjouke Voolstra notes that the kingdom has political consequences though the orientation and goals of the kingdom are not of this world.

James E. Metzler captures a comprehensive understanding of deliverance and wholeness with the Hebraic concept of shalom. Ronald J. Sider, focusing on the lurching of our planet toward a nuclear Armegeddon, asks for a movement energized by a thoroughly biblical faith. For Sider the way of the cross is central and the risen Lord provides the authority and unshakable hope for a nonviolent movement.

John H. Yoder traces the various uses of the term "evangelical" and observes that each of the peace church movements arose as an evangelical revival. Every spiritual renewal movement has had a wider impact in society. "That which has called itself 'the contemporary evangelical revival' is really less than that because it has yet to face the problems of nationalism, war, intercommunity violence and personal lifestyle with full trust in the power of the gospel to make changes in all of these." Richard Showalter links church growth and discipleship.

This volume is an important theological corrective to the historical evangelism-ethics dichotomy, and the dichotomy between "essentials" and "nonessentials." It could have been strengthened with a chapter on approach and methodology. Messengers of peace should be skilled in their understanding of structures. Much more could be done on the functional level of society that does not necessarily require alienation or expulsion from the country. On the other hand the drive for a handbook may be a cover for the wish to avoid the way of suffering.

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Christianity in Culture: A Study in Dynamic Biblical Theologizing in Cross-Cultural Perspective. By Charles H. Kraft. Maryknoll, New York: Orbis Books, 1979, 445 pp., $12.95 (pb)

Reviewed by Hans Kasdorf

The intended focus of this book is more accurately described by its subtitle, *A Study in Dynamic Biblical Theologizing in Cross-Cultural Perspective* than by its title, *Christianity in Culture.*

After setting the stage (Part I), in the actual discussion of the proposed subject (Parts II-IV) the author deals with the following issues: (1) the cultural matrix within which humankind operates; (2) the culture as a vehicle through which God communicates with culture-bound humankind; (3) the dynamics of revelation God uses to bridge the gap from the supracultural to the cultural spheres of operation; (4) the dynamic-equivalence models of translation (the Bible), transculturation (the message), and theologizing (interpretation of the gospel in cultural context); and (5) the ways in which the message affects the forms we use in communicating with people, or how we make sense with what we are saying both intra-culturally as well as cross-culturally.

The thesis of the book can be stated thus: Unless the communicator of the gospel carefully chooses appropriate forms for his or her message, he or she will not be heard. In other words, the forms used must conform to the culture within which we share the unchanging message. That is what Howard Snyder has called "new wineskins for old wine," what Kraft refers to as an "approach to Christian theologizing" (p. 385), and what contemporary literature on the subject calls "the contextualizing of theology." Kraft does this from the perspective of his specialized disciplines of linguistics and anthropology. The many graphs, case studies, and models he offers are not only symbolic of his creative mind and stimulating thoughts, but are also an excellent tool for the interpretation of his ideas.

The reviewer has the unique advantage of having been a student of the author of the time when this book was in the making. While reading, his mind flashed back repeatedly into the classroom where he participated in some rather intense discussions—if not debates—resulting from questions raised by students about the professor's propositions. Kraft's presentations were most provocative. And so are the issues in this book.

Although the author has revised and refined many statements and concepts, some readers will challenge him on several points; some may reach premature conclusions; still others may even reject him. That would be unfortunate, indeed. Yet the potential is there.

First of all, the work is refreshingly innovative; it is loaded with creative concepts and ideas about the meaning of theology in the cultural matrix (p. 45f.). Those who have not read Eugene Nida, Jacob Loewen, James Engel, David Hesselgrave, and others on cross-cultural communication may find Kraft too heavy and technical. The author takes familiarity with them for granted.

Second, there is a spirit of theological openness throughout the book. This may cause consternation to readers who come to the "dynamic of biblical theologizing" with defined sets of Western theological concepts that do not take seriously the ethnotheological paradigms which form the basis of Kraft's approach (pp. 291-312).

Third, throughout the book, the author seeks to reconcile what he terms the "thought patterns between missionaries and nationals" (p. 4). Unquestionably, some readers will feel that he overreacts to make his point. They will agree with him when he says that "the Christ . . . we present is only the *partial* Christ we have perceived from studying the Scriptures

from within our cultural frame of reference" (p. 306). But they will question some of his statements which seem to indicate that "career missionaries" have overwhelmingly misinterpreted the gospel by their "mono-cultural western biblical theology" in other cultures, whereas people of these cultures are overwhelmingly correct in their interpretation (pp. 3, 7, 12-13, 306).

Fourth, some anthropological "purists" may find fault with the author's anthropology. Kraft approaches the issues of theologizing more in terms of linguistic anthropology than cultural anthropology. That is his orientation, and he is the first to admit it.

In conclusion, the author asks whether the effort of reading the book has been worthwhile. Anticipating mixed response, he asks two things of the reader: "(1) be patient, God is not finished with me yet, and (2) choose those things here presented that you regard as helpful [and] ignore the rest." That means that he does not consider this the last word on the subject. He and others will say more about it.

This reviewer wants to respond in the affirmative. The hours spent in reading and studying have been most worthwhile. The book deserves more attention than this review has given it.

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The Gospel in Solentiname, Vol. 3. By Ernest Cardenal, translated by Donald D. Walsh. Maryknoll, New York: Orbis Books, 1979, 312 pp., $7.97.

Reviewed by Margaret Ediger

The twenty-eight chapters of this book reproduce the tape-recorded dialogues centered on different Gospel portions between semi-illiterate "campesinos" under the guidance of their revolutionary Roman Catholic priest, Ernesto Cardenal. The scene is Solentiname, a remote string of islands in Lake Nicaragua; the time, that recently-turbulent period in Nicaragua prior to the Sandinista revolution of 1979.

This book enables the reader to gain a glimpse of reality through the eyes of the poor and oppressed silent majority of the Third World. The "haves" are permitted to listen in as the "have-nots" respond to Jesus' teachings from within their context of struggle for social and economic justice. The privileged are invited to observe the evolution of Latin American Theology of Liberation at the grassroots level and to try to understand how the under-privileged can arrive at a biblically oriented condemnation of capitalism and imperialism along with a wholehearted acceptance of Karl Marx's materialistic philosophy, especially as it has been interpreted in the Cuban revolution.

Unfortunately, in the hands of this priest and his parishioners, the total message of the Bible is simplified to the call to the struggle for social justice and revolutionary change here and now. God often appears to be reduced to the impersonal force of love operative among the members of a communistic, classless society. The rich automatically stand condemned as evil and exploitive. The kingdom of God is a humanly constructed humanitarian society to be brought in by violent revolution. It will be characterized by a loving, mutually-caring socialistic society where interest in the welfare of the group will always supercede selfish individualism.

Such a utopian society reminds one of the relationships within the early church as recorded in the first chapters of Acts. However, there are significant differences, in that the early Christians fixed their faith on a personal, all-powerful God. They were conscious of the presence of the Holy Spirit working in their midst. While not ignoring the problems of daily living, the material aspects of their lives found meaning only in spiritual realities.

Although this book does not attempt to give a concise, theological, logical exposition of current Latin American theology, it does provide some helpful insights into how others in another context view reality. Certainly it raises issues which every Christian must consider. Perhaps it will provoke a soul-searching evaluation of North American values and presuppositions and a more active participation in promoting a more just, more humane society. Pastors preparing sermons on Jesus' parables will occasionally discover gems in its pages.

Nevertheless, as biblically oriented Christians, we must concur with the view expressed by Pope John Paul II to the Latin American bishops assembled last year in Puebla, Mexico, that while the church must preach social justice, it can never accommodate theologies that are inspired as much by Marx as by Jesus.

Margaret Ediger serves in Colombia with the Commission on Overseas Mission, Newton, Kansas.

The World of Islam. By John B. Taylor. New York: Friendship Press, 1979, 56 pp., $3.95 (pb)

Reviewed by Ken Reddig

To write a good introduction to any field of study is not an easy task. Such projects are often failures because they either become too comprehensive to be properly classed as introductions, or they oversimplify the subject matter to the point of distortion.

John Taylor does a creditable job of providing an excellent introduction to the faith of Islam. As a noted Islamic authority, he provides a quick resource to the key facts and fundamentals of Islam.

Writing from a historical perspective, he begins by describing the faith of Islam. Only in the third chapter does he discuss the life of the prophet Muhammad. This approach indicates a sensitivity to the members of the Muslim community who for centuries have been irritated by being labeled "Muhammadans," when in actual fact Muhammad is seen as a prophet, revered and modeled, but never worshiped.

While Taylor makes occasional comparisons to Christianity, his intent is not to analyze the merits of Islam vis-à-vis Christianity. He describes Islam's successes and disappointments against its own religious ideals. He treats Islam as a faith to be understood not only historically, but also in its sociopolitical context. He traces its spread throughout the East and into the West, noting that modern-day misunderstandings can be traced to periods of excesses (the Crusades by the Christians and invasions by Mongolian Muslims) by both religious groups. Certainly Taylor's involvement in Muslim-Christian dialogue is evident in his treatment.

This short booklet should be useful for students (both university and high school) and anyone else interested in a brief, enlightened description of Islam. However, it should be read for the purpose it intends to serve—a starting point to the study of Islam. The booklet entices the reader to explore further significant periods in the history of Islam as well as its particular religious beliefs. In a broad perspective, from its origin to the modern day, Taylor successfully introduces the reader to the world of this rapidly growing faith.

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Mission Trends No. 4: Liberation Theologies in North America and Europe. Edited by Gerald H. Anderson and Thomas F. Stransky, C.S.P. New York, Ramsey, and Toronto: Paulist Press; and Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1979, 289 pp., $3.45 (pb)

Reviewed by Kevin Genich

This volume of *Mission Trends* provides further input for reflection upon the question cited in the first volume (1974) which the editors regard as the major issue for Christians: "Not 'What is the Church?' but 'What is the Church to *do?*' " (p. 1). The answer given primary attention in *Mission Trends No. 4* is that the church must see its role as facilitator/catalyst/agent/context of humanization through liberation from oppression.

In the sense of the definition of "Third World" cited in *Mission Trends No. 3* (1976: "The Third World is 'not so much a geographical concept as it is a definition of an emerging consciousness on the part of deprived and relatively powerless people, wherever they live—an emerging awareness of their condition and a growing conviction that it need not and must not continue.' " p. 2), *No. 4* is, for the most part, an expansion of the collection and republication of contributions to the statements of "Third World Theologies." Rather than coming from Africa, Asia, or Latin America, most of these statements issue from oppressed people who (as graphically expressed by Leo D. Nieto) "form a part of the Third World living within the bowels of the First World" (p. 279). These include reflections from the perspectives of blacks, feminists, Asian Americans, native Americans, Chicanos, and (through surrogate representation by the region's Roman Catholic bishops) the powerless people of Appalachia. All of the contributions were originally prepared within the past nine years. Hence, especially in the black and feminist accounts, there is both retrospective reporting on the development of their respective "raised consciousness" and recognition of the growing relations of solidarity among themselves and with the oppressed peoples of Asia, Africa, and especially Latin America.

Also included are several "First World" theologians' interpretative analyses of the reactions and responses to liberation theologies, especially those (latter) being issued from Latin America. Some are critical analyses of the content or intention of liberation theology. Others are adaptive applications or extensions of the liberation perspective into the North American and European discussions of mission.

Peter Berger's contribution, an excerpt from an analysis of development theory and practice rather than a theological discussion of mission, provides interesting and needed grist for the mill of reflections on approaches to liberation. He denies the validity of the concept of "consciousness raising" on the grounds of its basis in the faulty assumptions of a "hierarchical view of consciousness" and the concomitant existence of superior and inferior levels of what it is to be "human." Making a distinction between different information and different values, he argues that when the goal of an encounter with others is more than understanding their "world of consciousness" (when the goal is development or social change), to approach them in terms of "consciousness raising" confuses and combines information and moral choices, resulting in "cognitive imperialism." As Berger puts it, *To understand is* not *to choose, but to accept as facts the choices of others. To act politically* is *to choose—and that means, whether one sees this or not, to choose between moral alternatives. Such choice, when there is power behind it, inevitably means* imposing *some of one's values upon others* (p. 107). The alternative, which Berger prefers, is to seek "cognitive participation," in which the moral intent of one's approach is recognized and all parties involved share in the shaping of both theory and development.

It seems to me that application of Berger's analysis of development to the theological analogue of mission as liberation provides a source of humility for all those who take part in the liberation discussion and debate. For anyone to assume fully correct knowledge not only of the experience(s) of oppression, but its solution(s) as well, and to act on such assumptions, smacks of the arrogance of "cognitive imperialism." This is not to argue for moral relativism, rather for an approach to mission as liberation which respects the choice of response to the distinctive ethics of the kingdom by those one may be seeking to liberate. Such respect is especially called for in light of the real risks which are assumed in the "powerlessness" of the servant's mode of witness and action toward liberation. In other words, liberation and humanization must already be present in the means of mission if it is to be consistent with its expected ends.

Kevin Genich is a student in Peace Studies at Associated Mennonite Biblical Seminaries, Elkhart, Indiana.

During the 1960s two opposing images of the city dominated discussions of the urban world. In his best-seller book, *The Secular City,* Harvey Cox popularized the notion that the modern city promised the liberation of humankind from the past. Jacques Ellul drew on biblical history to demonstrate that the city harbors demonic powers which constantly rebel against God.

We know that the city brings both good and evil images to mind. Riots and mob violence occur in the city; but we go to the city to find the museums which house the artifacts of the human past. The great centers of intellectual inquiry are to be found in cities; crime flourishes in population centers. Concentrations of wealth and economic power go hand in hand with cities; but in the cities we find the most squalid examples of human misery.

Some observers insist that the city is a primary feature of the modern world. The names of certain cities conjure up visions of political power: Moscow, Washington, Peking, London, Bonn, Paris. Communication and transportation systems connect city to city. For more than a century a massive migration has been underway worldwide—from rural to urban areas. Many cities have been unable to cope with this immigration, with the result that serious social problems plague most major metropolises today.

What does it mean to speak of salvation in the city today? In what particular ways does the urban world (mis)shape the human condition? The church has long felt ambivalent about the city. J. C. Hoekendijk observed that when the cornerstone of the modern city was laid, the church did not attend the ceremony. That lack of seriousness on the part of the church toward the city shows through when one considers the way the church has insisted on importing into the city the rural parish structure. During the past twenty years when middle class Americans abandoned the city for the suburbs, the church followed suit. The church gives the impression of failing to understand and grapple compassionately with the needs of the people of the city.

In his Gospel, Luke tells a major part of the story as Jesus travels from Galilee to Jerusalem (9:51-19:44). The story slowly gathers momentum. It reaches its dramatic climax as Jesus comes within view of the city. In a scene so full of tension that it causes him to weep, Jesus addresses "City of Peace" in words of both irony and compassion, "Would that even today you knew the things that make for peace! But they are now hid from your eyes." Jerusalem—city of God—was about to put the God-man to death as a last furious act of rebellion against God's righteousness and justice.

The Synoptic Gospels, therefore, unfold a vision of salvation which is apropos the city. The city was one of the anvils on which this vision of messianic salvation got hammered out. When Jesus invited men and women to accept God's reign in their lives, he addressed his invitation to both urban and rural folk. When he began to form his community of salvation, he drew in people of both rural and urban backgrounds. When Jesus offered salvation, it represented **wholeness** to the individual regardless of background.

Looking at the city today, Henry Schmidt notes, "The question is not whether modern people have needs but whether Christianity is adequate to meet those needs." Undoubtedly we need this challenge to reconsider the adequacy of the gospel and the inadequacy of our courage and commitment.

The Apostle Paul's missionary approach can instruct us. He followed the pattern of going to the centers. He went to the centers of Roman administration. He did not run away from the ambiguities posed by the political and economic powers. He also went to the centers of Greek civilization where he faced paganism's intellectual challenge to Christian faith. At the same time he stayed in touch with the centers of Jewish influence wherever he went, living with the demands of identifying with a distrusted minority while reaching out to the majority peoples as well.

It is time for the church to rekindle its courage and vision. The church must accept as normal the ambiguities in its relationship to the political, economic, intellectual, and religious forces in the city. The ministry of the Apostle Paul challenges the church today to think in larger terms with great boldness and conviction. If salvation is to come to the city, the church must sit loose of forms while announcing with clarity and urgency the Servant-Savior who is building a new city.—Wilbert R. Shenk

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MISSION FOCUS

A Christian Approach to Marxism

MARLIN JESCHKE

That we shall be saved, that there can be a kingdom of heaven, that an evident insight into dream contents established them for the human soul . . . this is not only conceivable, that is, formally possible, it is down-right necessary (Bloch, 1970b: 70).

Our citizenship is in heaven (Phil 3:20).

Little distinction is made in the popular mind between Marxism and communism. But as C. Wright Mills *(Marx and the Marxists),* and Frederic L. Bender *(The Betrayal of Marx)* show, we should distinguish between Marxism and the communism of Lenin and Stalin. Some students of Marxism even distinguish between Marx and Engels. The recent debate about the "younger Marx" goes further yet to distinguish between an early and a later Marx. Marx once stated that he was not a Marxist. And Engels, not Marx, is the author of the term "dialectical materialism."

Because distinctions between Marx and post-Marxian developments are not often enough recognized, some scholars have coined the terms "Marxian" and "Marxist" to sort out what Marx himself said (Marxian thought) and that has come to be stereotyped in his name (Marxist orthodoxy as defined by the Russian-dominated Communist parties of post-World War II Europe).

Studies in Marxism by now make abundantly clear that Karl Marx cannot be charged with what has been done in his name—at least from Lenin onward. But I am not so convinced that we can dismiss the Marx of *Das Kapital* in favor of the Marx of the early *Economic & Philosophical Manuscripts,* even though I can understand the appeal to Marx's early writings by so-called revisionist Marxists in order to struggle against the bad effects of a doctrinaire Marxism. I am not even convinced that we can dissociate from Marxism the Engels of 1883-1895 (the period he survived Marx), because Marx and Engels worked and thought together. They read, critiqued, and approved each other's written productions. Therefore, as many students of Marxism point out, one cannot always easily tell where one mind and pen leaves off and the other begins. I will therefore for purposes of the discussion define Marxism as the Marx-Engels work as a whole.

Most of us are all too aware of the approach to Marxism that characterized American Christianity through the period of the cold war. We owe it to ourselves to know that other attitudes once existed, long before the rise of the modern Christian-Marxist dialogue. In 1936 John MacMurray, of University College, London, wrote a book, *Creative Society,* quite sympathetic to the ideals of Marxism. According to MacMurray the task of Christianity in the face of communism was to "revolutionize itself, and regain its own

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substance. Then it will find that the transformation of Communism is nothing but the transformation of Christianity into its own proper form" (1936:131). Such expressions of hope by liberal Christians, not infrequently expressed by visits to the Soviet Union or in participation in Western Communist or Socialist political parties' activities, became the ground for attacks by anti-communists in the McCarthy era.

One cannot resist the mention of two sane books written during the cold war, that can still be read with profit because their authors neither got taken in by early liberal admiration of Marxism nor submitted to the cold war paranoia about communism: John C. Bennett, *Christianity and Communism* (Association Press, 1948, revised edition, 1960), and William Hordern, *Christianity, Communism, and History* (Abingdon, 1954). Bennett popularized the notion that Marxism is a Christian heresy. Hordern likewise showed that Marxism not only has the features of religion, phenomenologically regarded (sacred times, sacred places, sacred books, orthodoxy and heresy, but also shows a marked parallel to Christian faith in its content (possessing doctrines of primal innocence, the fall of humankind, progressive evil and good forces in history, a chosen people [the proletariat], Messianic "revelation," crisis and judgment, and a new paradisic era). In Stephen Neill's *Christian Faith and Other Faiths* (Oxford, 1961) communism is appropriately discussed as a para-religion in Chapter VII, "The Gospel of Marx and the Gospel of Christ," indicating that the church must encounter the phenomenon of Marxism in a fashion not unlike its encounter with Hinduism, Buddhism, and Islam.

Christian-Marxist dialogue

By now we have, of course, witnessed the advent of Christian-Marxist dialogue, and books about the possibilities and risks of dialogue have replaced the "Know Your Enemy" manuals of the cold war. People interested in a brief overview have available to them today two fine books: Jan Lochman, *Encountering Marx* (Fortress, 1977) and Peter Kebblethwaite, *The Christian-Marxist Dialogue* (Paulist Press, 1977). A wider bibliography is available in Dale Vree, on *Synthesizing Marxism and Christianity* (John Wiley & Sons, 1976), though this bibliography is already several years old. One should note also *Varieties of Christian-Marxist Dialogue,* edited by Paul Mojzes as a special issue of the *Journal of Ecumenical Studies* (Temple University, Winter, 1978). Assessments of the Christian-Marxist dialogue have also come from the Marxist side. One thinks, for example, of Herbert Aptheker, *The Urgency of Marxist-Christian Dialogue* (Harper, 1970), and of Roger Garaudy's two books, *From Anathema to Dialogue* (Vintage, 1966), and *The Alternative Future: A Vision of Christian Marxism* (Simon & Schuster, 1974).

The Christian-Marxist dialogue is a European development. We have not yet mentioned the quite different Latin-American Christian-Marxist development called liberation theology, recently in the forefront of religious news because of CELAM III and the Pope's visit to Mexico. The most recent (to my knowledge) comprehensive bibliography in English on liberation theology may be found in Robert MacAfee Brown, *Theology in a New Key* (Westminster, 1978). Where "dialogue" represented a willingness to

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engage in mutual critique, liberation theology represents the rather large scale incorporations of Marxist assumptions and analysis into Christian thought for the sake of understanding and resolving Latin American problems of poverty, exploitation, injustice, and oppression. (See Jose Bonino, *Christians and Marxists;* Jose Gonzalez-Ruiz, *The new Creation: Marxist and Christian?;* and Joseph Petulla, *Christian Political Theology*).

Although the idea of dialogue with Marxism has become almost the fashion in Christian circles today, Dale Vree in his recent book, *On Synthesizing Marxism and Christianity,* attempts to blow the whistle on it. He criticizes the "dialoguers" such as Harvey Cox and Jurgen Moltmann, labeling them heirs of the gnostics, persons who have compromised the doctrines of God's transcendence and of human sin. Vree holds that dialogue between authentic Christianity and authentic Marxism is impossible, for in the course of dialogue (that is, dialogue intent upon rapprochement), one or the other turns into heresy.

There are, it should be replied, different kinds of dialogue possible. I would not consider Jan Lochman, one of the earliest participants in the dialogue in Czechoslovakia right after de-Stalinization (in 1956), a compromiser. Nor Girardi. Nor Gollwitzer. The latter's *The Christian Faith and the Marxist Criticism of Religion* still stands as a worthy Christian critique of the basic problems of Marxism, Namely Marxism's atheism and its failure to recognize sin and grace. The persistent criticisms by Christians on these themes have registered upon some Marxists, notably philosophers such as Schaff, Kolakowski, Gardavsky, Machovec, Bloch, and Garaudy.

Marxist new humanity

My main concern in a Christian approach to Marxism comes out of my heritage of the believers church, and I would therefore like to focus upon a topic that does not usually get put out front: the Marxist vision of a new humanity and how to get there. I will not begin with the problem of revolutionary violence as the stereotyped passageway to the new age, though I reject violence as a means to the new community. I will begin rather with how Marx conceptualizes the new order. Much of Marx's discussion of it revolves around the word "utopian."

Every reader of Marxism notices before too long the Marxist depreciation of utopianism. Original Marxism was not unwilling to acknowledge its debt to utopian thought. Engels in *The German Peasant War in 1850* said that German socialist theory would never forget that it stood on the shoulders of these men, the "pre-historic" utopians such as Saint-Simon, Fourier, and Owen, "who despite all their fantasticalness and all their utopianism must be counted among the most significant brains of all time, who anticipated with genius countless truths whose validity we can now prove scientifically (Buber, 1949:6). And as late as the 22nd Party Congress Krushchev was still recognizing communist obligations by citing the "brilliant ideas" to be found in the "great utopian socialists Saint-Simon, Fourier, Owen, etc." (Gilson, 1975:24).

Despite its recognition of the insights of utopian thought, Marxism ultimately rejected utopianism as futile and even pernicious because it led people away from reality. Marx himself disparaged the utopians, saying, "They . . . dream of experimental realization of their social Utopias, of founding isolated **phalansteres,** of establishing 'Home Colonies,' or setting up a 'Little Icaria'—pocket editions of the New Jerusalem—and to realize all these castles in the air, they are compelled to appeal to the feelings and purses of the bourgeois" (Ulam, 1965:392). Dogmatic Marxism has ever since used the term "utopian" as a label to brand divergences from orthodox thought.

What explanation might be offered for Marxism's ambivalent feelings toward utopianism? Marx and Engels admired utopian thought because of the alternative it offered to the dehumanizing social orders in existence during their time. However, they shared with utopians the fundamental conviction expressed so vividly in the French revolution—that the human social order is not unchangeably fixed by God or nature, but is subject to change and improvement at the hands of people. The earliest utopias (those of More, Andrae, Bacon, Campanella) were, it must be admitted, full of fantasy. But with the coming of the Enlightenment and the French Revolution some of the ideals of these earliest utopias were realized, and the audacious notion of a consciously shaped society began to replace the notion of a fixed and invariable social order. Saint-Simon, Fourier, Owen, Cabet devised utopias that were intended, as Marx saw, for "experimental realization" in time and space. By the time of Robert Owen (1825) people on all sides saw from events in history that the future offered a wide range of possibilities, and their task was to decide what kind of social, economic, and political order to choose.

Despite their qualified appreciation of utopianism, Marx and Engels in the end condemned utopian thought because it was not "scientific," as the title of Engels' booklet of 1880 indicates. By the middle of the nineteenth century, science was much revered for its increasingly sophisticated group of the nature of reality and for the power this knowledge represented for humanity to control the forces of nature. A major effort was being made to apply the methods of science to the problems of the social order as well.

From the Marx-Engels point of view, utopianism marked a flight from reality and thus from responsibility for changing the social order. Utopian schemes represented escape from history, and utopian communal experiments represented an attempt to escape from a globally interrelated community into artificially isolated worlds.

As intent observers of history, Marx and Engels thought they discerned that by 1850 the development of the modes of production had drawn the world into an interdependent whole, rendering the establishment of isolated ideal communities (such as Fourier's) no longer a live option. Serious thinkers about future society would need to reckon geographically with global realities and world historical necessities (Negley and Patrick, 1952:14).

Committed to historical realism, Marx and Engels also alleged the futility of fantasizing attempts to escape the inexorable developments of history—efforts to return to some romantic time that history had left behind or, what was equally futile, to run ahead of history to establish communities of the sort that the development of history did not yet make possible or of the sort that lay in a direction quite other than the one toward which history was moving (Bloch, 1970a:90). In their notion of where history was moving Marx and Engels did, however, follow the utopian pattern of positing a radical break or transition from evil to good.

Over against the various utopian visions that came along,

Marx and Engels posited an inevitable global, world-historical revolution—what I will call "space-time totalism." This was the conviction that a totally new social order would come into existence, not piecemeal and in stages, nor in limited areas of the world at different times, but in one universal revolution.

As for the world of the new era, Marx said little about it. Indeed, the only reference seems to be Marx's off-guard remark in one of his writings about hunting and fishing in the morning, tending to cattle herds in the afternoon, and indulging in criticism at night—which sounds much like the life of a nineteenth-century country gentleman. Marx excused himself from the obligation to provide any further sketches of the post-revolutionary society because, he held, we do not know in advance what all the conditions of that era will be and therefore cannot prescribe for it, but must leave it to the heirs of that new era to work out its details. The one definitive general description, of course, was, "From each according to his ability, to each according to his need."

The course of history has vindicated the utopians and refuted Marx. His "space-time totalism" has been shown to be utopian in the bad sense of that term—unrealistic—whereas the socialist utopians have demonstrated their practical effective value.

With respect to geography, the merit of the small utopias, "pocket editions" as Marx called them, was precisely that they beckoned courageous souls toward and made possible small-scale exploratory experimentation without requiring such experimental souls to wait for the whole world to come along. With respect to time, the merit of utopian fantasies located outside of history and thus not tied to any particular time frame was that people were free to test such utopian visions **at any time,** without waiting for some inviolable zero hour of history to strike (a waiting Marx's followers found so difficult because he provided no countdown. Perhaps there is a fullness of time for all ventures. But if a vision of the future is not tied to some dogmatically defined world-historical process, people (who are usually less than infallible in their reading of history anyway) can test from time to time to find the propitious hour of history for a venture to incarnate a new vision of community.

A Thomas More Island, a moon colony, a city of the sun, a phalanstere, even a Lanark or New Harmony—all are limited, imperfect, partial, local, non-temporal, or temporary. According to orthodox Marxism this marks them as escapist exercises in futility. But one can argue that precisely because they are not global or locked into history, any part of them is available to people at any time. (e.g., one can borrow the idea of variety in labor from Fourier but set aside the eroticism.)

One could compare the work of Saint-Simon, whose notions were put to work by his followers in the building of canals, railroads, water works, credit banks, and trade organizations (Polak, 1961:263). As Bloch-Laine put it, "The utopian ideal is not necessarily situated outside of time. Its definition permits the affirmation of 'values' that one can hold and respect right away, the setting of 'objectives' that can be achieved one by one" (Bloch-Laine, 1965:422). Jurgen Moltmann likewise observed, "The prophecies and hopes of mankind find their mundane aspects and must be conveyed in the open possibilities of the world process" (Bloch, 1970b:24).

The mischief lies not in utopian thought, but in the notion that utopian thought cannot be related to history and reality. In an openly conceded utopian vision people are invited to generate dialogue between projection and reality, to pick and choose, to decide what is feasible and what is not; to measure visions against present reality and then to construct intermediate steps, programs, and melioristic stages. *In "utopian" socialism there is an organizationally constructive and organically purposive or planning element which aims at a restructuring of society, and moreover not at one that shall come to fruition in an indefinite future after the 'withering away' of the proletarian dictator-state, but beginning here and now in the given conditions of the present* (Buber, 1949:16). Ernst Bloch distinguishes between an air castle utopia and one that "transcends the present reality . . . but relates its plan to the specific contradictions and sufferings of the present, so that they can be overcome" (Moltmann, 1974:42).

Whether labeled utopian or not, thinkers who spell out their vision of the future, be it fantastic or realistic, make themselves vulnerable to criticism and rejection. Yet their willingness to put their ideas at the disposal of others bespeaks a measure of faith in others to utilize these ideas in some way. Indeed, their work provokes other people to imagine, to sift, to evaluate, and thereby encourages the release of creative thought in a widening sphere. But experiment, testing, and evaluation are precluded if people are asked to buy someone's vision of the future *en bloc* in blind faith. Moreover, the failure of Marx to give content to his vision of the future hindered its usefulness because people could not quarry building blocks from it for immediate concrete schemes and purposes that contributed to improving the social order.

The course of history further vindicates utopianism and refutes Marx-Engels in the actual development of the Marxist tradition. Space-time "totalism" has hindered rather than helped Marx's own followers to move forward in the creation of a new social order. To the extent that they have achieved anything at all, they have had to abandon his totalism and have had to return to the risk of repeated experimentation, and on limited geographical scales, as the condition of achieving the new social order he sought.

According to Marx, premature attempts at revolution were to be discouraged. Marx was adept at Monday-morning quarterbacking of aborted revolutions, explaining why sundry revolutionary attempts did not and could not have succeeded. But again, for better or for worse Marx's heirs did not permit themselves to be dissuaded from knocking at the doors of history numerous times (1848, 1871, 1905, 1917, 1948, 1949) before succeeding in their attempt to establish the new society—at different times in different places, and in many stages. Where the revolution has succeeded, Marxist societies have not seen the total re-creation at once of the new order that Marx promised. In fact, the path to communism has shown phases beyond the three steps outlined in classic Marxism: dictatorship of the proletariat, socialism communism (Petrovic, 1967: 5-19-50). Societ leaders have marked off 1871-1937, 1937-1961, 1961-1972, 1972-1980 as stages in the achievement of full communism, stages that do not coorelate well with the classic three just mentioned. We can see, then, that the historical "totalism" of Marx has had to be modified just as the geographical has had to be.

That the heirs of Marx and Engels have resorted to experimentation demonstrates that Marx and Engels held a defective view of utopian thought. Indeed, dogmatic adherence to orthodox Marxist theory has given continued

problems to Marxist societies on this point, as observers have noted for a long time.

To recapitulate, the Marx-Engels claim that their depiction of the future was not utopian but scientific tended to lock their followers into an all-or-nothing expectation for the future. This totalist, apocalyptic way of thinking has had to be compromised by the doctrine of "socialism in one country" and that of "many roads to socialism" and has had to be modified by the admission that there are many stages in the long road to communism, a road marked by the zig-zag of trial and error (Stojanovic, 1973:211ff.). Even then, "totalism" as a dogma and mentality has hindered elements of Marx's otherwise worthwhile vision from being tried where they should have been.

Utopianism and apocalypticism coincide

Karl Marx consistently (and, I think, rightly) connected utopianism with Christianity, as his reference to "pocket editions of the New Jerusalem" suggests. Over against such fantasy he believed he was grounding the prediction of a revolution and a new era in science. One must conclude, however, that Marx incorporated apocalyptic notions, even if unwittingly, from the fund of Christian notions prevailing in European thought.

Marx's and Engels' appreciation for apocalyptists in Christian history such as Thomas Munzer is well known (Tucker, 1972:49, 607). "Basically . . . Marx is closer to the sectarian thought [of such men as Munzer] than he is to the secular thought of his own age (Hordern, 1954:80). For the nineteenth century "found . . . the world steadily improving and moving inevitably into an era of earthly perfection." Marx, however, "differed from the nineteenth century thought with his catastrophic view of history, the idea that times grow worse and reach a crisis before they become better (*ibid.*:79).

> At the heart of apocalyptic lies the claim that *despite the injustices and conflicts of history, there is a force working in and through the acts of history which is, regardless of what men do or fail to do, leading man to a final solution of the conflicts of history. The duty of man is to understand this force, cooperate with it, and reveal its tendencies to others* (*ibid.*, 80). (For excellent descriptions of the nature of apocalyptic thought, see also Klaus Koch, *The Rediscovery of Apocalyptic,* Alec R. Allenson, Inc., Naperville, n.d. (1974?), chapter III, "What is Apocalyptic? An attempt at a Preliminary Definition"; and Leon Morris, *Apocalyptic,* Eerdmans, Grand Rapids, 1972, "Characteristics of Apocalyptic," pp. 34-68).

Our criticism of Marx's "totalism" above raises the question here of whether we are required then also to criticize Christian apocalyptic thought. The Hebrew-Christian tradition also possesses its prediction of a cosmic transformation of the human order, its version of a world-historical totality. Prophets spoke of a new heaven and a new earth. St. Paul spoke of the day when every knee shall bow and every tongue confess that Christ is Lord. The Revelation to St. John likewise describes a panorama embracing every tribe and people and tongue and nation. These visions are certainly global in scope and denote an epochal break in history.

But the Hebrew-Christian tradition has stood ready to recognize intermediate stages between the apocalyptic vision and partial fulfillments of it. The Christian claim that Jesus was the Messiah was denied by many because his mission did not literally fulfill the expected signs of the apocalyptic day. His impact was not immediately global, and it did not appear to represent the anticipated turning point of world history. In the face of such denials the Christian defense of the claim that Jesus was the Messiah included rather bold claims about apocalyptic signs and portents connected with the life of Jesus. But the Christian defense also immediately conceded the limited significance of the Christ event by designating it only a first advent and promptly positing the need and assurance of a second advent.

Though every knee did not yet bow, twelve disciples were prepared to constitute themselves a re-created society of faith, hope, and love. A partial fulfillment, this new community was a "foretaste," as theology calls it, a limited incursion of the eschaton. And while the failures of the Jewish and Christian communities seem more impressive than their achievements, we do have many instances in history of the meliorating impact the vision of the future had upon human society. One thinks of the monastic orders, the Czech Brethren, the Anabaptists, the Moravians, the Quakers, Methodism, Martin Luther King. These people did not wait for the end of the world, but inspired by visions of its end, brought intimations of its power and life into their own age.

> *A dialectical tension exists between that Absolute Future continuously breaking in on us, and our present struggles continuously reaching out toward the not-yet. The Kingdom [of God] is never fully realized, never an accomplished fact; but neither is the aspect of realization to be totally surrendered. It is the power of God as future that calls us to change the present* (Norris, 1974:151).

It was unfortunate that Marx, unlike his illustrious follower, Ernst Bloch, got so alienated from the Hebrew-Christian tradition that he could not learn from its experience with apocalyptic thought about the future. The heirs of Marx and Engels have learned that there is no such thing as a sudden and complete transformation of human nature and the human condition by an event of history called the revolution. Marx did, to be sure, insist—and rightly—that people had to be involved actively in their own emancipation and re-creation. But his sketch of the revolutionary process did not make room for what must surely be part of peoples' "salvation"—the possibility of trial and error, of success and failure, above all, the possibility of judgment —in short, the on-going discipline of living out models of the new order under conditions of the old. An inevitable once-for-all revolution cannot create an authentically "new man." (Russian Communist literature speaks of the "new Soviet man.") A new humanity is such only if it has chosen a new moral order in the face of and in the midst of other options, not merely been reconditioned by an externally engineered apocalyptic event of history. (Peyton Richter points out how widespread the notion was in Marx's time that "the root of evil is in the organization itself" (1971:17). See also Georgi Smirov, *Soviet Man: The Making of a Socialist Type of Personality,* progress Publishers, Moscow, 1973, pp. 9, 32, and passim.)

Because Marx considered utopian thought an unreality, he sought by a tour de force to make it reality—by recourse to the fantasy of a once-for-all revolution. In a sense one can say that the phenomena of utopianism and apocalypticism coincide. Both are projections of human imagination of or hope for a radically new world. And both inevitably register upon the present. They do so, however, not at once and in their totality, but translated in fragments through the

discipline of human obedience. "Utopia has long been a name for the unreal and the impossible. We have set utopia over against the world. As a matter of fact . . . the cities and mansions that people dream of are those in which they finally live" (Mumford, 1922:11).

Christian community: a foretaste of new humanity

The ultimate problem I have with Marx is his failure (or refusal?) to make room for the possibility of small communities that try to realize the new order of justice in the midst of the old order. Marx is locked into the scheme that has plagued Christendom since Augustine—the confusion between church and world that tries to impose a new order of justice upon the total society, and to do this resorts to violence and coercion and thereby aborts the goal it sets out to achieve.

Marx in his disparagement of utopian "experiments" failed to allow for what modern biblical scholarship has called inaugurated eschatology, the overlap of the two ages —the Christian community as people ahead of their time taking up the life of the age to come already under the conditions of the present age to the extent that this is possible and in the form—suffering love—that it seemingly inevitably must take. In thus uncritically accepting worldly or state-church political assumptions—namely, that a new social order is perforce an all-or-nothing matter—Marx ruled out the only real possibility of any new breakthrough. The alternatives left are either (1) for the new order to remain fantasy, as happened in Marx's own experience (he always pleaded the time was not ripe for revolution, and **that** is why revolutions did not succeed); or (2) for the new order to be imposed on the whole society by coercion and thereby to become merely an inverted form of the old order.

It is not enough to answer Marx with the charge that as long as his theory of a new social order excludes limited attempts at new communities, his own hope of such a new social order is condemned to perpetual frustration. The answer from US Christians must come in deed as well as in word. Visible communities must *show* that justice, compassion, peace, freedom, creativity, love, and joy **can** come into being even under present social conditions. And Marx presumably did not see any such as convinced him of their validity and effectiveness. And even if he did, we will need to grant Marx the option of rejecting these, as Luther did, and as many American Christians also do.

In this we are not noting any striking new theme. It has for too long been thus: In the name of a dream of a total new order, people forego limited and incomplete foretastes or down payments of it. They decline the discipline, testing, experiment, trial and error, and correction that must be an inevitable part of our co-creation with God of a new humanity.

I still identify myself with the community that lives under the sign of the cross and thereby comes to inherit at least in part what Marx saw from afar but could never realize on the terms he defined. In the believers church I begin here, today, to participate in the life of the age to come.

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The Practical, Non-theoretical Confrontation of Poles and East Germans with Marxism

BILL YODER

Poles and East Germans most frequently confront socialism while shopping, at work, or in schools. Conversations concerning the chronic shortages of certain consumer products are extremely frequent. This does not necessarily imply a low standard of living! Both countries appear to have more than enough automobiles—simply too few spare automotive parts. Warsaw's women wear fur coats and the latest cosmetics, yet white house paint and water faucets are frequently unavailable. Poles "without connections" need to stand in line at meat counters, yet on a world scale they must be among the largest meat consumers. A lower level of meat consumption might shorten lines. East Germans, who rarely need to wait at butchershops are the third largest meat consumers per capita in the world.

The German Democratic Republic is the first socialist country in which collectivized farming has succeeded. The GDR and Poland are respectively the ninth and tenth largest industrial powers in the world.

Apparently the vast majority of citizens in Eastern Europe (and elsewhere) compare their own standard of living solely with those who are "better off," thereby consistently ascertaining their own misfortune. This is a major cause for Poles longing after life in the USA and for many GDR citizens after life in West Germany. Yet Soviet citizens consider shopping in Poland a privilege, while Poles prefer shopping in the GDR and, when possible, in the West.

Contrary to the implications of Western media, economic factors appear to be a central cause of the physical or mental emigration of East Europeans to the West; "freedom" is much too intangible for the non-intellectual. Evangelicals are by no means free of such homesickness for the West; scornful East Germans label the concept **Fernweh.**

A further consumer problem is the issue of hard (Western) currencies. Local citizens in Warsaw Pact countries are not allowed to earn hard currencies; they can only be accepted as gifts from Westerners. Yet certain government stores will accept only hard currencies, usually for consumer items which cannot be obtained elsewhere. In Poland the least problematic way to obtain a new car is by purchasing it with hard currency in a state-owned store. For these reasons many Poles attempt to obtain legal or illegal employment in Western countries.

Such incongruities lead to many cases of minor and major corruption—and innumerable moral conflicts—in Poland. Poland in particular has both the official, socialist economy and an illegal, capitalist or "black market" one in which prices and currency exchange rates fluctuate according to supply and demand. Occasionally, an open question emerges: Which economy does a larger volume of consumer business?

Observers make much of the inefficiency of socialist means of production. Obvious examples for laypeople would include the Polish transportation and postal systems. Local citizens blame a lack of profit incentives for low quality work and the refusal to fire incompetent employees. I attribute workers' low morale also to the lack in purchasing power of the money earned: a Pole can become well-situated much more rapidly through trafficking with the black market or working in the West. The same person employed in Western Europe, North America, or Africa can earn an annual Polish salary within a month. Efficient production due to an idealistic commitment of the individual worker to the common good of all is a positive, socialist goal; yet this appears unattainable in present-day Poland.

The non-economist remains mystified about why in a planned, socialist economy any increase in the production of goods such as apartment houses or armaments demands further belt-tightening from the remaining economy. Materials, available work force, and time schedules always appear limited. The inverse is true for the capitalist economy, whose success requires a constant increase in buyer demands. In socialist economies the seller is "king"; the customer is being done a favor in receiving a chance to purchase a product. Western stores are filled with consumer goods while bank accounts remain relatively low; the opposite is true in most socialist economies. As a Polish official stated,"There remains a disproportion between the amount of goods on the market and the amount of available cash." Too much local currency remains unspent.

The vast majority of Poles, including Polish evangelicals, attempt to circumvent any confrontation with Marxist thought. Evangelical ministers commonly speak of "fleeing this evil world for the joys of heaven" without causing second thoughts even among their younger listeners, all of whom received their formal education in a Marxist context. Without noticeable remorse, Polish Protestant leaders confirm the requently acclaimed death of Christian-Marxist dialogue. The practical demands of the Polish government on its citizens are light and do not preclude the one-track, mutually-exclusive existence of both church and state. Especially for church establishments, "aversion" is a more apt word than "dialogue" to describe the relationship of the church to socialism. Poles usually unabashedly favor "bourgeois" tastes and are strongly apolitical, a tendency reinforced by East European political parties' practice of doing all "Realpolitik" behind closed doors. Political passivity appears chronic. West European students take Marxism (and the

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ecumenical-liberal Christians among them their Liberation Theologies) much more seriously than do their Polish counterparts.

The government and general society of the GDR are also more earnest about their ideology and its practical consequences than are their Eastern neighbors, forcing Christians there to formulate a more coherent response to socialist phenomena. GDR educational systems and job markets are more restrictive for Christians than for other citizens. One example of the ideological laxness of The Party in Poland is the fact that many of its deceased members receive Catholic funerals, an unheard-of occurrence in the GDR. In response not only to ideological and practical pressure, but also to the academic and non-emotional bent of German theology, numerous church committees have at considerable length developed articulate responses to Marxism. Many non-evangelical World Council of Churches-related Lutherans defend themselves against any convert, internal Western migration and are fully capable of censuring Western society in a convincing manner. They appear concerned about finding their own unique way in a socialist setting and discovering alternatives to a Christianity based on capitalistic models.

The centrist and moderately leftist Lutheran Church establishment is worth watching; it frequently offers erudite, plausible positions differing from those advanced by groups associated with the "Christian Peace Conference." Its prominent slogan in the early 70s was **Kirche im Sozialismus** ("The church is not for nor against, but within socialism"). GDR Lutherans are among the first East European Christians displaying concern about nuclear energy, ecological issues, and lifestyles. As Heino Falcke has pointed out, communist parties in Eastern Europe have accepted the capitalistic definitions of economic progress and societal happiness.

Many Polish Catholics are also committed to staying in Poland, but for reasons unrelated to socialism. They possess a conservative-patriotic commitment to "Mother Poland" and the Polish soil, an arch-patriotism predating Marxism. The same reasons for remaining also apply for many Russian (but not German) evangelicals living in the Soviet Union.

Most Protestant churches in Eastern Europe find themselves in a serious financial and theological-cultural dependency upon the West. Financial dependency is for obvious reasons encouraged by the state; few church building permits are granted without the necessary brick and mortar being purchased locally with Western currencies. Hard currencies are frequently required to purchase printing paper, organs, and autos for clergy. Trips by church delegations to the West, some partial clerical salaries, and even church-owned hospitals in the GDR require Western church aid.

These dependencies frequently have led to situations in which our fellow believers have become locally non-indigenous admirers of Western evangelicalism, mimicking rather than challenging us by demonstrating alternative paths for the expression of Christian faith. In this respect a strong minority of East German Protestants appears least "guilty." I recommend their writings on topics such as peacemaking and disarmament, ecology, the developing world, the evangelical-ecumenical dichotomy, and of course, socialism. Church authors to remember include Dietrich Mendt, Werner Krusche, Heino Falcke, Gunther Jacob, Johannes Hamel, Albert Schonherr, and Bruno Schottstadt.

Marx and the Bible (a review)

MILLARD LIND

Marx and the Bible. *By Jose Miranda, Maryknoll, New York: Orbis Books 1974, 338 pp., $4.95 (pb)*

Marx and the Bible has five chapters and an epilogue. Chapters 1 and 5 deal with Christianity and Marxism (not communism), while chapters 2-4, sandwiched in between, are an exegesis of the biblical text on the theme of justice. The author claims that he does not attempt to find parallels between Marx and the Bible, "but rather simply to understand the Bible." He understands his method to be "the most rigorous and scientific exegesis" (p. xvii). This review is mainly of this exegesis of chapters 2-4, but we will look briefly at chapters 1 and 5, for these chapters attempt to relate the biblical thought to the world.

Chapter one

Chapter 1 is "Private Ownership under Challenge." The author first points out the difference between the common understanding of the right of ownership and the Catholic (St. Thomas) conception. The former sees this right as the right to use property and even to destroy it. The latter sees this right of ownership as "the ability to care for and to distribute." The author points out that the foundations of civilization are based upon an unjust distribution of re-

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sources and wealth. The inequality of private ownership is due to the accumulated distribution of income. He sees private ownership therefore as robbery—"legalized, institutionalized, civilized, canonized robbery." In contrast to this, the Bible and the early church fathers called the giving of alms the doing of justice. It was reparation for stealing; receiving alms was recognized as the right of the poor. Law, according to Catholic doctrine, is state intervention for justice.

Chapter five

The last chapter is entitled, "Faith and Dialectics." The first part of the chapter deals with New Testament faith, and the latter part sets forth the connection between Marx and the Bible. Miranda holds that the righteousness of the Book of Romans is not an imputed righteousness of the exegetes, but is a real freedom from injustice, the same as in the Book of Exodus. New Testament faith was not faith in the person of Jesus (ontologically) but in Jesus as the Messiah (vocationally), one who would be the bearer of God's kingdom. This kingdom of God has now come, according to Paul and John, as manifested in the resurrection and by the Holy Spirit. The resurrection is not to be understood individualistically but is to be understood as the first fruits of the new community. The historical fact of the kingdom gives meaning to the confession, "Jesus is the Messiah." The kingdom, God's just rule, has now come, though its consummation is still in the future. Miranda closes the chapter by showing how Marx and New Testament thought intersect. While there are analogies between Marxist thought and the Bible, it is questionable whether Miranda succeeds in showing that they are one and the same.

Chapter two

Chapter 2, "The God of the Bible," is subdivided: The Prohibitions of Images of Yahweh, To Know Yahweh, The Reason for Anticultus, Knowedge and Praxis.

The author begins chapter 2 by saying that he is not attempting to harmonize Marx and the Bible but to understand what the Bible says. He holds that the Bible is an essential unity and that it has not many meanings from which we can pick and choose but one meaning which has authority for us. He raises the question of biblical theology. Does the Bible have one essential message, and if so, can it be gathered up under the rubric of justice? This reviewer's opinion is that justice may be better than covenant or salvation history since the emphasis on justice is eschatological, that which the Bible witnesses to and points toward, and since it is a moral concern which overlaps to some extent with concerns of the secular community. It is doubtful, however, whether biblical justice is the same as justice outside of the community of faith, whether one term can gather the totality of meaning, or whether it would be better to use a cluster of terms. This question of biblical theology needs to be addressed to Miranda and is perhaps as important as the question of whether he is faithful in the exegesis of this passage or that.

The idol is prohibited in the Old Testament, according to Miranda, because Israel's experience of God was to hear his command. Israel's experience of God was to come under the command of another, and this command was not to be neutralized by making God into an image. Only one is created in the image of God, and that is human who stands over against the self in one's fellow humans. Miranda here gets at the heart of the meaning of the prohibition of the image, according to many Old Testament exegetes. The image was at the heart of the Near Eastern religious system, permitting magic and manipulation. With one stroke the heart of this possibility is removed. We should note, however, (correcting Miranda) that Israel heard not only God's Word of **command** but also of **promise.** Just as command cannot be neutralized, neither can promise. The only right relation to command is to obey, and the right relation to promise is to trust. Miranda points out that this biblical way of knowing God is a focal point of the Bible's irreconcilability with Western civilization. This difference is due not to Hebrew culture or mentality but to the fact that the whole Hebrew mind and mentality were engraved with the self-revelation of a God whose being is to command us and therefore cannot be neutralized by objectification.

According to Miranda, the knowledge of God is equivalent to doing justice to the neighbor. He bases this on such passages as Jeremiah 22:13-16 and Hosea 6:4-6. He unites this concept with the prophetic criticism against the cult and holds that there is no place for the cult until after justice is achieved. It is difficult at this point to see how he escapes from the emphasis of the secular theologians on a cultless community, which then has no structures for the achievement of justice other than those of the state. May not the "knowledge of God" (experience of God) qualify "justice " as well as vice versa and indicate that biblical justice can be experienced only within the structures of God and people? Other Near Eastern nations besides Israel also had a concern for justice, for the widow and orphan. The criticism of the Bible is that their state structures could not achieve justice for these poor, but that this could be achieved only by the "knowledge of God," the experience of his just acts of deliverance from Egypt and the revelation of his just ways at Sinai (See Micah 6:18). The Bible sets forth an alternative structure to that of the state for the achievement of justice, namely, the structure of Yahweh and people; only within the experience of this relationship can Yahweh's justice be known.

The author emphasizes the biblical unity of knowledge and praxis by reference to the Decalogue. The foundation of these words is the revelation of God who redeems, who does justice. The first two commandments present this God as unconfused. The last eight commandments are imperatives of justice. The author might have noted that these imperatives are addressed to the community of those who had experienced God's act of justice.

Chapter three

Chapter 3 is "God's Intervention in History." The author deals with this topic under the headings, The God of the Exodus, and The Plan of Yahweh.

Miranda points out that the revelation of Yahweh is fundamentally associated with his act of liberation from Egypt. Contrary to many commentators, he denies that this act is used in the Bible to elicit gratitude from those who experience this event. This denial is questionable, inasmuch as this event is the foundation of biblical exhortation in its appeal to obey law, a motivation which

provides the possibility of an inner response to law.

In his exegesis of Deutero-Isaiah, Miranda's exegesis falls wide of his attempt at "the most rigorous and scientific exegesis" (p. xvii). Miranda says, "Let us state again that the simple fact is that by defeating the Babylonians ('Chaldeans') Cyrus liberated all the peoples which had been exiled and subjugated by Nebuchadnezzar. This is enough for the propet of Yahweh:

Thus says Yahweh,
Your redeemer,
the Holy One of Israel:
For your sake I send an army against Babylon;
I will knock down the prison bars
and the Chaldeans will break into laments (Isa 43:14)"

(p. 82). The fact that Cyrus's decree which sent Israel home was within the context of decrees which liberated other peoples is set forth on the *Cyrus Stele,* but is not stated by Deutero-Isaiah. Had the prophet wanted to state this, his best example would have been the Babylonians themselves who, according to the Cyrus Stele, were delivered by their own Murduk "who scanned and looked (through) all the countries searching for a righteous ruler willing to lead him [i.e. Marduk] [in the annual procession]" (ANET, p. 315). Cyrus says, "Without any battle, he [Marduk] made him enter his town Babylon . . ., sparing Babylon . . . any calamity" *(ibid).* According to his account, the Babylonians greeted him jubilantly "through whose help they had come [again] to life from death . . ." (*ibid.,* p. 316). According to the prophet, however, Cyrus subjugated and enslaved the Babylonians (Isa 47) as well as other peoples whom Yahweh gave him in exchange for Israel (43:1-8, cf. 45:14). Cyrus' mission as Yahweh's anointed (45:1) was for the sake of Israel (45:4), to return Israel to Palestine, to rebuild Jerusalem and the temple (44:28). Israel then was equipped with Yahweh's Spirit and sent forth to establish justice in the earth, a justice based upon Torah (42:1-4).

Why is Miranda so eager to acknowledge the particularism of Cyrus but so hesitant to acknowledge the particularism of Israel? He says, *In the message of Deutero-Isaiah the passages referring to the liberation of Israel by Cyrus have an obvious particularistic mark. But even this message composed in and for such concrete and determined circumstances nevertheless insistently looks toward the realization of justice in the whole world.* He then cites the servant passages among others where Israel was to bring Yahweh's justice and salvation to the end of the earth (pp. 87f.). The point is that despite Miranda's reluctance, the mission of Cyrus according to Deutero-Isaiah was to cause Israel to return to its homeland. From there Israel was sent out to establish Yahweh's universal justice, a justice which Yahweh achieved through the servant's word and suffering. While particularism is expressed in Deutero-Isaiah both in the choice of Cyrus and of Israel, the point of both particularisms is to establish universal justice by proclamation of Torah to the nations.

Miranda correctly claims that the oldest source of the Pentateuch set forth Yahweh's choice of Abraham as one through whom justice is to be achieved in the earth. He says, *Exegesis today has clarified this central thread: the Yahwist decided to write a prehistory of the Exodus in order to explain the origin of sin and in order that a sinful world might feel the need for the intervention of Yahweh and for the election of a people which would have the mission of abolishing sin in the world* (p. 89). He then goes on to show that this election is to redress the outcry against injustice, which is best expressed in Abraham's stand before Yahweh at the destruction of Sodom.

Miranda sees this emphasis also in the Psalms and is critical of scholars who see the Psalter's division between just and unjust as a tendency toward Pharisaism. He also criticizes Mowinckel's interpretation of the "evil doers" of the Psalms as evil spirits, but holds that these are the unjust. He points up Psalm 82, which contrasts Yahweh with the gods of the nations in that he demands of them the administration of justice, which they are unable to do.

In his discussion on law, Miranda attaches law to the Exodus event rather than to Sinai, thus getting around the dichotomy of the Exodus-Sinai events of North and Von Rad. This leaves him with certain other problems, however, and he could better make his point by accepting the rejection of this dichotomy which other scholars have made. The point is that the liberation of the Exodus is at the foundation of law, serving as both motivation and model. *Paul's revolutionary and absolutely central message, that justice has been achieved without the law, would lack all force if this were not precisely the same justice that the law hoped to realize; this is the revolutionary and unprecedented core of his message* (p. 152).

Chapter four

Chapter 4, "Law and Civilization," is divided into three sections: Judgment in Justice?, The Law, Civilization.

Having introduced the idea of justice which is to find its rightful place in the kingdom, Miranda moves to the concept of judgment, specifically the Last Judgment—the last act of God's intervention in history. This necessitates study of the word *mishpat,* the term about which Miranda says, "And it is on this term, it seems to me, that our interpretation of the entire Bible, and the New Testament in particular, depends" (p. 109). *Mishpat* can mean law, judicial act, right, justice, extra-judicial intervention for justice's sake, and most important, it designates the content of the Last Judgment.

Methodologically Miranda chooses to leave the historio-cultural question (how the West has differentiated among the various meanings of *mishpat*) and give particular attention to scientific exegesis. Taking issue immediately with the many Western translators who think it proper to introduce various terms to translate the one word *mishpat,* he accuses them of setting themselves up an absolute criterion and then moving on the assumption that what seems appropriate in our culture, history, and language, is *actually so.* "That which is absolute and independent of all cultural variation coincides exactly with Western culture" (p. 110). Not denying that several different words may be used to translate *mishpat,* he maintains, *The scientific task should be to try to understand why these ideas are expressed as one in the word* mishpat *in the Bible; it should not avoid the problem of having facile recourse to the assertion of equivocality. Otherwise, the peculiarities of our language and our culture are stretched like a veil between Scripture and us; this keeps from its intended hearers a biblical message which could challenge our moral codes and our entire civilization* (p. 110).

In the first section Miranda turns to the question of whether we are to think of judgment or justice. He surveys the LXX use of *mishpat* and concludes that *dikaiosune* is

used most often to get across the idea of **justice.** But justice comes to mean not so much to judge, as to save from oppression. This is so in the Judges, 2 Samuel, the Psalms, and several prophets; to judge here means that God intervenes on behalf of the oppressed "to save the world from the oppression of the unjust" (p. 115). Such intervention speaks of the Last Judgment, the roots of which we find not late in Israel's history, but already in Yahweh's revelation of himself in the liberation of the Exodus (p. 116). In particular, Psalm 62 (the hymn of confidence) with its reference to the power and compassion of Yahweh who repays humans as their works deserve helps us to understand the New Testament expectation of the Last Judgment. Miranda's contention that the passage in Romans 2:5-12 refers to the same Last Judgment portrayed in Matthew 25:31-46 is interesting. Paul's "men of discord . . . who trust in injustice" (2:7-8) are the same ones who are to be judged in Matthew 25. The discussion goes on for several pages.

Miranda gives considerable attention to the two terms, Yahweh as Judge and Yahweh as Warrior. The latter seems to be the earlier term in the Old Testament, but the two may actually be used synonymously, for Yahweh the Warrior struggles against injustice and for the triumph of justice (cf. p. 123).

Moving to the New Testament, John, Matthew, and Romans, Miranda says, "In Christ's work of justice on behalf of the poor and helpless, Matthew sees—as does John—the definitive realization of Judgment: 'till he has led *mishpat* to victory' " (p. 129). With special reference to John who has several passages dealing with judgment, Miranda concludes that he has established "the meaning of *mishpat* as the elimination of oppression and the realization of justice" throughout the entire Bible.

In the section on law, Miranda looks at the formulation and use of law to establish justice. He finds it significant that laws were originally called *mishpatim.* This meant that the original intention of legislation was to defend the poor, liberate the oppressed, and do justice to the poor. He will therefore argue that when later laws were not formulated with this in mind, they were not in accord with the will of God (p. 137). Both the prophets and Christ practiced this discernment.

At great length Miranda goes about proving that the law as Yahweh intended it predated the Sinaitic Covenant (he speaks of this as Exodic Law) and that the law was not originally introduced as God's stipulations governing the Covenant, but rather as the kind of regulation that should govern human relations. Important is not the form of the law but the content, and Miranda maintains that *All the Biblical legislation originally had the purpose of looking after the rights of the neighbor and for this purpose Israel adopted the already existing laws (for instance, in Canaan) which seemed the most just, whether they were conditional or apodictic* (p. 143).

In dialogue with the scholars Von Rad, Noth, Alt, Zimmerli, Friezen, *et. al.,* Miranda applauds or faults them as they stand toward his basic conclusion: *The most authentic and primordial theologization of the laws was made by connecting them with the characteristic essence of the God called Yahweh as he revealed himself when he broke into human history to save the oppressed from injustice* (p. 149).

In the third section Miranda turns his attention to Civilization. In this section he turns quickly to Paul in Romans. Paul has concerns about paganism and relationships of man to man. He asks: "What is the meaning of the great emphasis put on interhuman injustices which occur every day in every place and with which we always end up by finding a *modus vivendi* without much astonishment?"

Here we're back at judgment and how death relates to God's justice. Paul will speak of the law and its purpose. Both for the prophets and Paul the law is important because of its concerns for justice.

Review summary

1. Miranda holds that the Bible is an essential unity and that it has one message which, while subversive, has authority for us.

2. His choice of justice as the rubric for biblical theology may have positive values over such rubrics as covenant or salvation history because its overlap with the interest of the worldly community is apparent, and its eschatological character may be more apparent—it is not so much the center of biblical theology, but the goal toward which biblical faith points. This raises the question however of whether one rubric does justice to biblical faith or whether a cluster of terms would be a better way to gather up the biblical message.

3. Miranda points up the relation of epistemology to the question of justice, that the ontological question is one by which humans attempt to capture divinity and use religion for their own interest in dominating others. Biblical faith emphasizes not that we can know God in terms of his essence but that he knows us; that is, that we experience him in terms of his acts for us and in terms of his command. God's act for us liberates us from human domination; obedience to his command liberates the brother.

4. Miranda points up that the "knowledge of God" is not cultically oriented but is closely related to "doing justice" toward the neighbor. This close relationship needs to be accented as it certainly is a relationship expressed throughout the Bible. The danger of this emphasis, however, is that of a cultless community which then has no structures for the achievement other than ethnic or state structures. May this close relationship between knowledge of God and doing justice suggest that biblical justice has a different quality from justice within state structures?

5. Miranda's thesis of the commonality between the biblical message and Marxism is questionable and raises the question of how biblical justice is to be achieved and whether method may not qualify the character of Biblical justice. Miranda's "doing justice" is a "neo, neo, neo-Constantinianism" (designation of John H. Yoder) and leaves us with the choice of two Constantinianisms—that of Carter or that of Castro. Miranda stands on the shoulders of Hegel. Is biblical justice a radical new approach to the ancient vision? We have seen that Miranda's Constantinian views ruled his exegesis of Deutero-Isaiah. On the other hand, Miranda sometimes speaks of planting seed, which is a break with his past. He is arguing against his post-medieval Catholicism, using the tools which he has. We who are heirs of the Renaissance and Reformation have more critiques. We should not regard him as an enemy, but as one who is making a first-generation critique.

6. Miranda's critique should help us to stand outside our social situation and to look at ourselves more honestly. It should prevent us from looking at justice issues in superficial ways and help us ask what systemic change is necessary. We should be careful that a superficial justice does not become our current form of self-identity, a shell or ritual without the spiritual heartbeat.

7. Miranda should challenge us to greater disenchantment with the mini-Constantinianism of Mennonites, and to more careful articulation of the servant model as an alternative to Constantinianism. We need to do more explaining and exhorting of biblical forms of justice and what such forms might take in our own day.

What is the answer to the question posed, after many pages of discussion? *The injustice, the mercilessness, the oppression, and the exploitation to which all cultures have learned to resign themselves are precisely what Yahweh wants to abolish in the world. The great purpose of God's intervention in human history is definitively to eliminate all the injustice and enmity, which many Christians, it would appear, find so normal* (p. 168).

Miranda insists that two inescapable specifications affect the meaning of Romans: (1) the use of "just man" in 3:10 which is parallel to the earlier "doer of goodness" and hence indispensable for understanding Paul's use of justice; and (2) the structural importance of the first chapters, 1:18-3:20, whose meaning in the whole rest of the letter is condensed in the one word, sin in 3:9. The essence of sin is injustice, and the essence of salvation is working justice. What is the kingdom of God according to Paul? "It is justice and peace and joy in the Holy Spirit" (14:17). Once again Miranda draws in many exegetes who support his view or with whom he takes issue—in many instances, rightly so.

One more point is worthy of note. Miranda does not understand Romans 1:18-32 as listing the catalogue of sins which individuals commit, but rather as that of which the society of the Gentiles is guilty. Paul is concerned with societies, civilizations, and cultures—not so much with individuals. If the latter is the case, then justice or justification is the making righteous of one person. But if Paul is concerned with human civilization, then justice means changing that civilization so that the poor and oppressed are made the recipients of *mishpat*.

In the last portion of the chapter, Miranda deals with some of the obvious contradictions in Romans if the respective passages are applied to individuals, (e.g., Romans 2:13-15, 36-29 vs 1:18-32, 3:0, 19-20, 27-30). The contradiction is overcome if Romans deals rather with the **problem of society**. Miranda draws some worthwhile observations from the exegesis as these relate to sin, the world (synonym: present evil age), the law, and the effect upon all of them of Jesus' death on the cross.

When before our eyes the law crucifies as an outlaw the only man who did not know sin, God destroys sin and the law forever. At this point the justice of God begins in history and the "justice" of the law ends.

Paul makes his whole point in the synonym of two formulations of the object of faith: "to believe in the one (God) who justifies the impious one" (Rom. 4:5) and "to believe in the one (God) who raised Jesus our Lord from the dead" (Rom. 4:24) (p. 191).

Reviewer's note: I had the benefit of the Colloquium on *Marx and the Bible* held at Associated Mennonite Biblical Seminaries, Elkhart, Indiana, November 4-5, 1979. My statements on Chapters 1 and 5 owe much to J. R. Burkholder and Al Dueck. Notes on Chapter 4 are from a statement made by Henry Poettcker with only minor editing. The comments in the summary were nearly all made in the discussion at the Colloquium. I hope that these statements are accurate. However, this review is not intended to be a reflection of the Colloquium, but is essentially my own statement (as qualified above), though the statement would be far poorer had I not had the benefit of the Colloquium.

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"Christ is the Answer"?

PERRY KEIDEL

Many young people of Christian background have been taught since adolescence that Christ is the answer. Confident and sincere, many youth are disillusioned when they have the good fortune to leave their sheltered community to experience the harsh realities of the world at large. They discover that this true but simplistic statement doesn't satisfy many situations and people. This apparent insufficiency may shatter their faith in their faith. This all takes place because the young person has been raised to define his or her religion in intellectual terms instead of as defined in James 1:27: a Christ-like attitude and lifestyle.

The Pharisees were intellectualists. Once Christ turned their speculation around to the area of personal morality (Lk 13:15), once to God's revelation (Jn 9:1-3). Though the Apostle Paul occasionally used philosophy when he recognized its usefulness to his concept of Christianity or to evangelism, he warned against it. He recognized rationalism as something that could potentially threaten relationship to Christ (Col 2:1-9).

Historically, Christendom commissions patron saints of truth, following and quoting them dutifully, faithfully formalizing their teachings, carefully recording them in its annals. But we dare not make more claims for ourselves or our faith than can be delivered. Knowing the Truth Incarnate does not automatically communicate to us his infallibility. We cannot partake of him as of the Tree of Knowledge and become as God in our wisdom. That is what the deceiver says, who himself as Lucifer failed to become like the Most High. Being Christian does not make us street-corner vending machines with all solutions hidden in our bowels to be regurgitated when the naive drop in their coins. But we can offer the way of the cross to those who are seeking direction for their lives. Christ's redemption answers those whose lives are being destroyed by sin.

When we try to understand the perplexities of life, we assume that answers are to be found! Searching for a lost key is based on the assumption that a key exists. But our creatureliness contains a problem. Not only is our vision limited because we are finite creatures, it is clouded because of our natural alienation from the Truth Incarnate. We are a fallen humanity.

Aha! So the agnostic is the most realistic after all. The overwhelming subjectivity of our existence denies us the possibility of affirming any knowledge dogmatically.

Yes, if God does not exist to provide objective truth, we are left with only ourselves. When our reason fails to provide a comprehensive understanding of ourselves and the universe, we can either drift aimlessly along on the momentum of our past, or we can discard reason as useless and embrace nihilism. Either choice is dangerous.

If God does exist, what difference does that make?

The difference is in our lives. Christianity is not a neatly bound, take-it-or-leave-it package of answers to every perplexity of existence. Christianity is a commitment to a way of life. Christ's purpose (which becomes ours) is one of redemption: reconciling people alienated from God because of sin. Sin is the transgression of an ethic: God's law. Christ removes the sin and guilt that clouds the light of God and provides the direction and means for followers to live a holy, compassionate lifestyle. J. I. Packer wrote that the "substance of Christianity is faith in the forgiveness of sins through the redeeming work of Christ on the cross" (1975:144). Genuine repentance produces a life-long commitment to Jesus Christ (*ibid,* p. 203).

The first of the Ten Commandments mandates that the true God, the One and Only, and he exclusively be worshiped. This certainly appears to be a difficult commandment. Who has the correct concept of God? We are not worshiping God if we imagine him to be someone less or other than he is. A significant number of theologians say that in our finiteness we are not capable of conceptualizing God. If this is true, Paul was wrong in trying to describe to the Greeks the God represented by their altar to the unknown god. If we cannot know the God who is, we cannot worship him. If he is so transcendent, so wholly other, that human terms are insulting and belittling of him, why even try to know him, much less pray to him?

Then there is another group with a calculating inclination. They deftly define boundaries, build boxes, and draw circles. Their perception is so clear that they can readily categorize anything: "black or white," "invariably according to this pattern," "inside or outside the circle of truth." They speak of God as though they could predict or even determine for him his next move. Their concept of his divine plan is so charted that they are oblivious to any contradiction. Their faith admits no rational difficulties, mystery, surprise, or ineffability. They have a quick answer to every objection—usually accompanied by a smile and pat on the back to the prospective convert.

Neither of these extremes represents the spirit of Christ! We cannot know God, but he has made himself known to us. Any image **we construct** of God is an idol because the image of God **is revealed** to us in his Son. The initiative is us-ward. It is both true that "no man can see God and live," and "he that hath seen the Son hath seen the Father." This is a great mystery. God is both unspeakably transcendent and capable of personal intimacy. But the nature of his transcendence is not to leave us in the dark. The nature of his intimacy is not exhaustive knowledge of him or of our existence, an existence of which he is both author and sustainer (Col 1:15-17).

Thus we may affirm that Christ is the answer, providing we are careful how we say it. Yes, Christ is the answer to those who wish to know God and how to respond to him. No, knowing Christ does not mean that we will understand everything.

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Chronicle

CONSULTATION ON WORLD EVANGELIZATION
June 16-27, 1980, Pattaya, Thailand

Theme: HOW SHALL THEY THEN HEAR?

An Evaluation

The Consultation on World Evangelization (COWE) met in Pattaya, Thailand, June 16-27 at the beautiful, luxurious Royal Cliff Hotel. For ten days more than 800 Christians from widely diverse nations and cultures worked together to discover strategies for reaching the unreached peoples of the world.

The theme for this meeting was **How shall they then hear?** taken from Romans 10:14. Planning for this consultation was carried by the Lausanne Committee for World Evangelization (LCWE). The consultation was another step by that committee to work at the question of world evangelization—especially of those labeled "unreached people." In their introduction LCWE stated: "The main objective of this consultation is to develop realistic, evangelistic strategies to reach, for Christ, hitherto unreached peoples in the world. The basic unit for evangelization is seen as a 'people group'."

In order to accomplish this purpose seventeen mini-consultations were organized prior to the consultation to develop strategies (some of us objected to the constant use of this word) for seventeen widely divergent groups of people who are seen and categorized as unreached, from secularists to refugees. The success of these mini-consultations was at best, spotty. No one had time or energy to travel long distances to work on this material before the meeting in Thailand so the preliminary papers were often the work of one or two individuals. While these were helpful, they fell somewhat short of the original vision of 600 people working fervently in preparation for Thailand '80.

This gathering produced many good results. Time will reveal more hidden values which this international study consultation accomplished. The genuine effort of the planning committee to call a cross national meeting should in itself receive commendation. To sit at table with brothers from Poland and learn that one of their congregations is now meeting in a former historic, ksmet Mennonite building was a deep thrill. Other moving experiences were to hear a brother from East Germany voice strong opposition to the continual clapping—and to joking, serious Bible study, and reports of refugees all coming from the same platform; as he said, "Where I come from clapping was done when we were taken to the prison by those who opposed Christ; and the platform is used for serious teaching." Or, to participate in a mini-consultation dominated by powerful American electronic church leaders and hurt for the brother from Madagascar as he tried to explain in slow but good English what it meant to be part of the church there during times of national liberation and to see him cut off by fluent, impatient English speakers. All this became part of the experience of being together with those from many tribes and nations.

The Consultation on World Evangelization in Thailand met in the shadow of the May meeting in Melbourne, Australia, of the Commission on World Mission and Evangelism of the World Council of Churches. While the planners had originally hoped COWE could meet in January of '80, that was not possible and so the COWME event spilled over into the Thailand '80 happening. Some sixty "evangelicals" were present in Melbourne. They reported honestly, and with a great deal of appreciation, what had happened there. In fact, on several occasions I heard the statement, "There was much more serious Bible study and prayer at Melbourne than there is here." Having these two meetings in such close proximity to each other, then, provided opportunity to examine what there is that divides or separates the two groups. This question was answered most definitively on the evening when participants were invited to a special meeting to hear reports from Melbourne. During that discussion, attended by over 300, Allan Cole and Waldron Scott gave incisive reports of the COWME meeting—much of it quite sympathetic. Following their presentations Emilio Castro, organizer and leader in the Melbourne meeting, gave his rebuttal.

Emilio said, "Melbourne is only one stop in the road. The challenge of world evangelization is all of ours. At Melbourne the topic was prayer. Hope for the church will have to take the power of prayer seriously if we are to step back from the boundary of a holocaust. Many are beginning to look to heaven for deliverance from terrible trouble. The mission of the church is to recognize the growing gap between rich and poor. The spiritual power of the kingdom lies in the powerlessness of the cross. That's where salvation was released."

Following Emilio Castro, John Stott, member of the Lausanne Committee asked: "Do you (COWME) hear the cry of the lostness of people without Jesus Christ as much as you hear the cry of the poor?" to which Emilio answered, "The poor starving person and the lost person are

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the same." At that point there was much murmuring around the room and then Stott said, "Of course they are the same people but there is need to distinguish between the lost soul and the hungry body."

This distinction became the unofficial tension at Thailand '80. While the organizers sought to focus on the unreached peoples many others, especially from the "third world," wanted to focus on the need for justice and help for the poor who actually are the same group of unreached people. Bishop David Gitari, along with others, drew up a "Statement of Concerns for the Future of the LCWE" which includes four requests. Two of these are: (1) "That within three years, the LCWE convene a World Congress on Evangelical Social Responsibility and its implications for evangelism; and (2) that the LCWE give guidelines on how evangelicals who support oppression and discrimination—(thus hindering evangelism)—can be reached by the gospel and challenged to repent and uphold biblical truth." This letter was circulated to all participants with the request that they sign and return it. Over 200 people signed this letter of concern.

It must be said to the credit of the leaders of this Consultation, counsel was taken seriously. At no time, however, was there time for discussion of issues. That was done behind closed doors and by only a few of those present. In the final Thailand Statement of *Commitment to Christ,* point 3 reads, "We pledge ourselves to serve the needy and the oppressed, and in the name of Christ to seek for them relief and justice." In this meeting the LCWE at Pattaya may have taken a step forward, always careful, however, not to offend those who see evangelism as exclusively salvation of the soul.

Did Mennonites play any significant role? I think they did. David W. Shenk, Eastern Mennonite Board of Missions, helped in a significant way to shape the theology of mission to Islam; Paul Hiebert, Fuller Theological Seminary, continued to insist that the "homogenous unit principle" is only one part of the evangelistic task and helped to introduce Jesus language and kingdom theology. Others insisted that any honest attempt to evangelize unreached people must address the question of poverty and injustice. The greater benefit was likely to us. The breadth, warmth and favor of the leadership group was refreshing. Some of us saw anew how parachurch organizations came into being as organized, mainline churches withdrew from the task of evangelistic outreach. This may be one of the most profound insights—LCWE represents "parachurch" while Melbourne (COWME) represents "church," and the parachurch agencies are carrying major responsibility for reaching the unreached.

It's difficult to predict the effects of Pattaya (pot-tea-ah). Some of the mini-consultation papers will be printed with major editorial refinement. It certainly created awareness of two billion (more or less) unreached people. Clear opposition to violent methods of revolution were stated. And there was a new awareness of the refugee and the poor.

During the Consultation the World Relief Commission, relief arm of the National Association of Evangelicals, took sixty participants to the border refugee camps. During this trip, workers Reginald Reimer and Art DeFehr explained the tenuousness of life for these nearly 200,000 displaced persons. We traveled into Kampuchea (Cambodia) to the camp where food, farm tools and garden seeds were distributed to villagers inside Kampuchea. Next day, the Vietnamese made an early morning raid on this village, cutting off the "land bridge" (access route for food and supplies) and capturing several of the people who had told about the relief effort the previous day.

During this week in Thailand the ambivalence among some evangelicals about our responsibility to feed the hungry and care for the needy moved from academic discussionto practical reality. Evangelism for some was seen to include both elements. It may be in years to come that this is the great contribution of the Thailand '80 consultation. —Paul M. Gingrich

MISSION FOCUS

Thirty-five articles which appeared in *Mission Focus* 1972-78 now in one 488-page volume. Articles discuss biblical and theological bases for mission, mission in the context of many world situations, and strategies and policies for mission. Published by Herald Press. Released in August 1980. $11.95 ($13.85 in Canada). Available from your bookstore or from Herald Press, 616 Walnut Avenue, Scottdale, PA 15683.

COUNCIL OF INTERNATIONAL MINISTRIES
May 14-15, 1980, Akron and Salunga, Pennsylvania

An Administrative Perspective

The **Council of International Ministries** (CIM) held their spring meeting at Akron and Salunga, Pennsylvania, May 14-15, 1980. One of the issues the CIM studied was administrative supervision of field staff. Donald R. Jacobs, who completed service as Secretary for Overseas Missions for Eastern Mennonite Board of Missions and Charities, Salunga, August 31, offered these remarks and observations out of his years of experience both in the field and as an administrator.

THE CHANGING MISSIONARY SITUATION

A subtle shift is occurring in mission philosophy and administration which creates unease in missionaries. In the not too distant past mission planning assumed the centrality of the missionaries who in turn saw themselves as the kingpins (if not the kings) in the whole enterprise. They were chosen because of their leadership qualities and were mandated to make things happen. They were listened to with great interest and were given broad-ranging decision-making latitude on the field. It would not be an exaggeration to refer to the missionaries as the darlings of modern missions.

That was in an era gone. Now the center of attention is the emerging church. Missionaries are still a part of the picture, to be sure, but they might well feel elbowed out in favor of the new darlings, the emerging churches with their leaders and hierarchy.

It is not unexpected, therefore, when a missionary, in a weak moment, can confide, "But what about us missionaries? Are we no longer important?" Of course missionaries are important. They continue to serve a crucial need in the life of emerging churches, but their base constantly shifts; that shift cries out for understanding. One way of conceptualizing the problem is to look at the structural shifts which occur as national churches emerge.

Normally from the time missionary activity is begun until the church is a mature body responsible for its own life, missionaries pass through several stages. In the beginning they form a field council consisting of missionaries who make decisions. Normally all ordained men and a few select women are included in these councils. While the advice of local leaders might be sought, decisions are ultimately made by the missionaries in their councils.

A second stage occurs when the emerging church gains strength, in which case certain missionaries who have attained a sufficient trust level in the church are permitted to participate at some levels of decision-making while other missionaries are left out. All sorts of conflicts surface in this stage, particularly among the missionaries. Many missionaries simply feel abandoned. They are expected to carry on as in the past but now without access to decision-making forums. Those few missionaries who are privy to the power bases are often misunderstood and as often misunderstand others.

In the third stage the national church relieves all missionaries (with perhaps a rare exception) of upper-level decision-making involvement. If missionaries continue to serve in the church, they do so at the sufferance of local leadership. They are often given some decision-making responsibility within departments, but seldom are they allowed to enter into hierarchical decision-making.

Missionaries find themselves caught in the center of this kaleidoscope all too often without realizing what is happening.

There is reason to believe that neither mission boards nor missionaries have kept pace with changing situations and therefore changing demands. Of all people, mission administrators should perceive what is happening, but they tend to go on with business as usual. The missionary suffers; in turn the national church suffers because frustration produces its own species of fruit.

In order to sharpen the problem and to therefore further this discussion, the following observations may be helpful. These are the observations of one mission board at one point in history and are not to be taken as universal. It would be helpful if sister agencies could check these observations against their own learnings.

1. When "mission" structures which existed in the past are superseded by church structures, missionaries discover that these structures are not usually equipped to place high priority on missionary problems and needs. Meeting missionaries' personal needs lags behind other, more "urgent" problems.

2. Missiological considerations encourage a thinner spread of missionaries across a larger area. This serves to weaken earlier mutual support systems provided by large expatriate groups. In the past, because of large missionary communities, missionary subcultures were formed in which each person received some support. It also cut them off, to some extent, from the local communities.

3. As structures move into their third stage, a common complaint is powerlessness because churches make decisions which affect missionaries often without due regard to the missionaries' opinions. This becomes critical when the local national church assigns missionaries to do

certain things for which there are insufficient finances. The top blows when missionaries see the church "misspending" funds which should have gone to their projects.

4. As emerging churches gain independent status, agency headquarters are reluctant to be overly assertive. Missionaries may develop the attitude that if the mission board is not going to look after their interests as they should, then they must fight their own battles with the local church leaders. This can be a helpful process, or it can end in tragedy, for the missionary particularly.

5. Due to cultural differences, local churches often find it difficult to resource missionaries. The cultural hurdles are much more difficult to surmount than was earlier anticipated. A missionary will always be a guest in a host country. This fact is not always recognized.

6. Just at the time when long-term, settled persons who require a minimum of administrative servicing are most urgently needed, short-term workers continue to be available and are being sent. The ratio between short-term and long-term persons may be about the same as in the past. The difference is that while attrition in the past often arose from unanticipated interrupting causes, now more and more people have a short-term mentality from the beginning. They simply opt for one or two terms. There is a place for short-term people, and they will continue to fill a need in overseas missions. We need to understand, however, that they require a special kind of support.

7. In an attempt to deal realistically with missionary personal needs, many agencies develop a shadow administration on the field to look after such things as salaries, furniture, and transportation. The missionaries understand what is going on, but such arrangements can be interpreted as a camouflaged power system.

8. In order to bridge the gap between missionary, church, and headquarters, some agencies appoint regional directors who look after the spiritual and physical needs of the missionaries. These persons are obliged to work with all three points of the triangle. Where such regional offices exist, the local church can interpret the arrangement as almost a vote of non-confidence in the local church. Furthermore, the person who is assigned to do this footing creates enemies faster than friends.

9. Missionaries do not become super normal when they arrive on the field. They are normal people who require cultural peer experiences. They also need to have a clear reading of themselves by someone of their own culture. The need to belong and the need to be approved are human birthrights. To think that missionaries do not have these basic human needs is foolhardy.

10. As in many other things, the good old days of robust field mission support systems is gone. Missionaries are less involved in decision-making than formerly. We neither mourn nor celebrate the fact. We live with the reality that God joyfully continues his "new creation" within changing times, circumstances, and relationships. *—D. Jacobs*

In review

Let's Quit Kidding Ourselves about Missions. By James M. Weber. Chicago: Moody Press, 1979, 128 pp., $3.50 (pb)

Reviewed by Howard J. Habegger

James Weber is a veteran missionary to Japan, having served there for twenty-five years. He observes in the Preface to *Let's Quit Kidding Ourselves about Missions* that his "heart and mind have been exercised in many areas" relating to world missions. The book gives the impression that he unloads a great deal of personal frustration about some views of missions held by many evangelical Christians.

Weber is quite confrontational in tone and style. In his desire to set the record straight, he tends to overstate his case. This is particularly evident in his strong convictions concerning the missionary command. In the Great Commission passages, he says, the "command is to attack," the "command is that we move out and conquer" (p. 71). His militaristic overtones give this reviewer difficulty. Third World Christians would no doubt read this as evidence of the old imperialistic mentality.

Weber is a strong advocate of denominational missions. He comes down hard on evangelical Christians who are easily swayed to support independent missionaries. He comments: *It is my definite opinion that churches and individuals in the homeland should think twice, maybe three times, before taking on the support of independent missionaries, unless donors have a very definite and effective means of investigating that work.*

The author deserves credit for dealing forthrightly with some problem areas in missions today. While tending to be somewhat argumentative, Weber expressed deep concern about the misunderstanding which surrounds much of the missionary enterprise today. He believes many church members are confused about the basic rationale for missions. He is clear that emotionalism, humanism, and other non-scriptural grounds will not sustain motivation and interest in world missions. A problem with his definitions and categories is that he interprets the gospel message too narrowly.

Readers of this paperback must use a critical eye. One can appreciate and respect Weber's deep convictions about world missions. At the same time, in his desire to clarify the issues he tends to speak in dogmatic terms. The reader must discern the strengths and weaknesses of this volume because both are evident.

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The Senders. By Paul B. Smith. Toronto: Welch Company, 1979, 125 pp., $4.95 (pb)

Reviewed by Howard J. Habegger

The Senders is a "how to" book. Within its pages are many detailed and practical suggestions on how to organize, program, and conduct a missions conference at the local congregational level.

The book is written in the context of the famous Peoples Church in Toronto, Canada. The name of Oswald J. Smith is synonymous with the Peoples Church. His son Paul wrote the book from the perspective of this large interdenominational congregation.

While many ideas about motivating and running a mission conference surface, many of them would not be suitable in many congregations, especially those with denominational ties. The mission conference model suggested by the author is one in which the pastor or pastors maintain(s) total control—even over the message of missionary speakers. The author's insistence at complete control feels like manipulation to this reviewer.

The book has bold suggestions about raising money for world missions. The "faith promise" offering system is strongly endorsed and has been effective in the Peoples Church. Hundreds of missionaries are supported by the Peoples Church through the faith promise offerings.

Pastors can gain some helpful ideas from *The Senders.* At the same time many pastors and congregations would not feel comfortable with this rather bureaucratic model of a mission conference.

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Of Life and Hope: Toward Effective Witness in Human Rights. By Mia Adjali. New York: Friendship Press, 1979, 90 pp., $2.95 (pb)

Paradox and Promise in Human Rights. By Peggy Billings. New York: Friendship Press, 1979, 126 pp., $2.95 (pb)

Peace, Justice and Reconciliation in the Arab-Israeli Conflict: A Christian Perspective. By Cranford Pratt, et. al. New York: Friendship Press, 1979, 65 pp., $1.95 (pb)

Sojourn in Mosaic. By Robert A. Elfers. New York: Friendship Press, 1979, 88 pp., $2.95 (pb)

Reviewed by Conrad G. Brunk

Ostensibly, these four books concern themselves with two different topics—the first two with the issue of human rights, and the latter two with the problems of peace and war in the Arab-Israeli conflict. Upon closer reading, however, the alert reader will see that these topics are closely intertwined. Conflict is often a conflict of perceived rights, and a truly "peaceful" resolution to the conflict must seek to maximize respect for the rights of all parties. Nowhere are basic human rights more at issue than in the intensely festering conflict between Arabs and Jews in the Middle East. Together, these four books put forward a theological challenge, especially to those of us from Anabaptist-Mennonite heritage who are accustomed to talking a great deal about peace and peacemaking, but little, if any, about rights. Indeed, we often talk as if the two concepts move in opposing directions.

With these four books, Friendship Press has attempted to bring a straightforwardly Christian-biblical perspective to bear upon the problems of conflict and the violation of basic human rights. The two books by Billings and Adjali are attempts to find a biblical basis for Christian concern with the gross violations of human civil, social, and economic rights that characterize life in Canada and the United States as well as other more repressive societies.

Both books take as their point of reference the Universal Declaration of Human Rights of the United Nations Charter. Specific examples of current violations of these rights are detailed and analyzed from the point of view of faithfulness to the demands of the gospel. The authors believe that each of

these rights—to food, shelter, fair treatment, non-discrimination, religion, life—reflect a basic Christian respect for the equality and dignity of all persons under God which Christians, of all people, must take seriously.

The books stimulate the reader to consider concrete, practical responses which Christians in community can make to those who suffer the violation of their basic rights. The clear call to Christian involvement in the altering of oppressive power structures through political action will provide some pause and critical reflection for the reader who is skeptical of such means of Christian witness in the world.

Peace, Justice, and Reconciliation in the Arab-Israeli Conflict is an attempt by a group of Canadian scholars to formulate a Christian understanding of the Arab-Israeli conflict and a view of peaceful resolution which minimizes injustice and suffering on both sides of the conflict. It undermines many of the myths which exacerbate the conflict and which unfortunately are purveyed by Christian advocates on both sides. In an introductory note, Alan Geyer says aptly of the book's authors, "Their Christian style as ministers of reconciliation is a model of peacemaking scholarship."

The book by Elfers is in a different class. It is a short, fictional narrative about an American who inadvertently learned the complexity of the Middle-East conflict while traveling through the area in search of the lost daughter of a friend. Despite the admixture of romance and adventure, the book provides helpful insights into the conflict as it is felt by those involved.

These books, especially the first three, are excellent resources for discussion groups and Sunday school classes from high-school age and up. They include helpful references to other resources such as films, books, and articles on the topic. I recommend them highly.

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Bruckho (formerly ***For This Cross I'll Kill You***). By Bruce Olson. Carol Stream, Illinois: Creation House, 1973, 208 pp., $1.95 (pb)

Reviewed by Omar Eby

The blurb baits: "The astonishing story of a 19-year-old youth's capture by stone age Indians—and his adventures in Christianizing the Motilone tribe." The book delivers. Even the most seasoned or jaded missionary will find provocative ideas and moving accounts. The style is fast-paced and anecdotal, in *Reader's Digest Condensed Book* crispness of narrative.

In his high school days, Olson was a spindly, nearsighted, awkward, lonely boy in a proper Minnesota Lutheran home. He came to the evangelical faith in a way characteristic of his later life; he did it by himself, alone. Attending an interdenominational church, Olson met missionaries with "a forceful message." Gradually his "pleasant sane dream of becoming a linguistic professor vanished into this ridiculous idea of going to other countries to talk to savages about God."

Not finishing college, Olson set off for Caracas, Venezuela, to "quiet the driving urge" and "find peace in my heart." He was nineteen, had $70, knew no Spanish, had no concrete plans, and was greatly disappointed to find various missionaries "extremely guarded in their approach" to him. He was still a lonely boy: *Loneliness plagued me. Often I would walk the streets for hours, just looking at people's faces and trying to overhear their conversations. What I needed was a real friend—one who knew me completely; a brother.*

Such candor holds genuine pathos, but unfortunately the personality type is not rare among missionaries. The isolate person (sometime the glorified self), set against society and heritage, seeks fulfillment and identity by the acceptance of a needy people whom he or she can help or save. Miracles abounded for Olson, as they must for isolated people: God spoke through a stubborn mule; a $100 check arrived the day he needed an airplane ticket; and escapes from death became numerous.

Eventually, through the backdoors of Venezuela and Colombia, Olson made contact with the Motilone Indians with the help of the Yukos, whom he bribed with a zipper salvaged from his trousers.

During the next five years, Olson lived among the Motilones, learning about their people, language, and culture. He helped first a few, then later, nearly half the tribe to "tie their hammock strings into Jesus Christ." Then he began a program to aid the nomadic people to become an agricultural people. None of this section of the book loses its mission-adventure narrative, for the book is not a development manual, except for a brief epilogue. Along the way, Olson found in Bobarishora (Bobby) a blood brother. In the epilogue Olson wrote:

I began to introduce a program oriented to the needs of the Molilones according to their priorities, a program of scientific benefit coordinated through their traditional structural system. This consisted of: (1) control of disease and epidemics through established health centers, and the introduction of medication through the collaboration of the local witch doctor and family; (2) the bettering of food staples and agriculture on an organized basis; (3) with the over-production of agricultural products a small economy was introduced from sale of products by the Indians adjacent to colonization; (4) education and foundation of bilingual schools.

Troubling is the heavy note on individualism in Olson's book. "I was the only outsider in the Motilone area." I was strangely pleased with myself. It was as though I had a secret that the world did not know: a secret place that no one else had been allowed to enter." He did it by himself, alone. True, the Holy Spirit was present, but where were Olson's spiritual mentor and siblings who could have provided him necessary fellowship and discipline? The book implies that Bruce Olson is a feasible model for successful missions, a model which smacks too much of "go do your own thing as a good old American individualist." At best the Bruce Olson story can serve to inspire us—but not to imitation.

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Coming Home to China. By Creighton Lacy. Philadelphia: Westminster Press, 1978, 156 pp., $4.95 (pb)

Reviewed by J. Winfield Fretz

About a month before I left for my second trip to China in two years I was asked and consented to review this book. It seemed to me like a wonderful way to check the author's observations, experiences, and insights with my own. The author and the reviewer of this book have one fundamental difference, however. The author was born in China of missionary parents and spent his early years there. For him the return trip in 1977, the year of my first trip, was a kind of homecoming, while for me it was an exciting first exposure to the fascinating Chinese people and their culture and country.

I found myself concurring with Lacy's observations and evaluations. I had many of the same uncertainties and asked many of the same questions about the guides' pat explanations about the longtime effectiveness of the communist or socialist solutions to longtime universal problems—for instance, how the Chinese system hopes at the same time to emulate Western industrial efficiency through automation and yet fully employ its 900 million people.

Chapters 1 to 3 are in a personal vein; Lacy retraced steps of his early life and noted changes. They are interesting but not of the same value to the general reader as the later chapters on "Political Perception," "Revolution in Education," "Serve the People," "Religion in China," "Some Popular Misconceptions," and "Continuity and Change."

Coming Home to China is a splendid, short, readable volume for the person wanting a brief introduction to the New China. For the person who expects to visit China as a tourist, I highly recommend the book. As one could expect from the author's background, the volume raises questions and comments most incisively on religious, educational, and moral matters. Despite China's official stance toward religion as irrelevant to the life and culture of new China, Lacy observed that religion is much more deeply embedded in the fabric of its national life and culture than its public relations statements indicate.

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Training for Evangelism. By Richard Sisson. Chicago: Moody Press, 1979, 203 pp., $9.95 (pb)

Reviewed by Floyd G. Bartel

I thoroughly enjoyed reading this "how to" manual for training lay people to witness in a visitation evangelism program. Richard Sisson, the author, is a pastor in a Baptist church in Madison, Wisconsin, but he was pastor of the Northside Gospel Center in urban Chicago when he wrote this book. The church in which this evangelism training program developed is not located in the suburbs—for which many of the visitation evangelism programs seem to be designed. Yet this congregation developed an effective ongoing witness program with a steadily growing and maturing membership.

One of the things that make this book interesting reading is the deep conviction out of which this pastor has written about his firsthand experience of developing an evangelism training program. He shared candidly both the strengths and the weaknesses of their program. This honesty recommends the manual to any people genuinely interested in learning more about their faith in clear verbal witness. The author gave credit to James Kennedy's Evangelism Explosion for several key elements such as on-the-job training in a systematic training process. In several ways this training program resembles that of Evangelism Explosion.

After using a couple of chapters to make a strong case for visitation evangelism training in the local church, the author developed a chapter on "Overcoming our Fears," another on "Mastering the Crucial Issues in Sharing the Gospel," and another on "How to Give One's Personal Testimony." The heart of the book is four chapters devoted to a careful explanation of how to share the basic propositions of the truth of the gospel clearly and effectively. His last five chapters deal with some practical help in answering basic questions and objections, some dos and don'ts in evangelism, personal and corporate follow-up, and some practical suggestions on how to get started.

The strengths in this manual are the author's emphasis on the whole congregation's ownership for the visitation evangelism program, on the importance of and methods for corporate follow-up, and on the involvement of every group in the congregation in the visitation program. I also appreciated his emphasis on making friends of the new people who begin to respond through this kind of program. The manual has a positive emphasis throughout.

Sisson was correct when he said that unless a congregation schedules visitation evangelism into its regular program, little will be done. He also observed correctly that only a relatively small percentage of any given congregation will become deeply involved in an ongoing way in such a visitation evangelism program. However, all of those who do seem to find this kind of training program helpful to their own personal spiritual growth. There still is no better way to clarify and deepen one's own understanding of the gospel than to try to share it with others.

While much of this manual is helpful, several things I also question. First, the use of the King James Version throughout is unnecessarily archaic in a personal witness training program. Second, the author's strong insistence on certain theological perspectives—such as a strictly substitutionary view of the atonement, the eternal security of the believer—reminds one that along with a "how to" manual, one also is likely to borrow a certain theology. I would like to see even more attention given to the evangelism of presence through caring and service ministries and how a verbal witness is integrated into such ministries. Another weakness is in the listing of additional resources. While this is helpful, they are too limited to one publisher—namely, Moody Press.

With some awareness of the above weaknesses, I still recommend this manual to pastors and congregations who find themselves in need of some "how to" help for an effective visitation evangelism program. As training plans using a propositional approach to personal evangelism go, this one is certainly worth considering.

Floyd G. Bartel is Secretary for Congregational Mission for the General Conference Mennonite Church.

A People of Mission: A History of General Conference Mennonite Mission Overseas. By James C. Juhnke. Newton, Kansas: Faith and Life Press, 1979, 280 pp., $7.15 (pb)

Gospel Versus Gospel: Mission and the Mennonite Church, 1863-1944. By Theron F. Schlabach. Scottdale, Pennsylvania: Herald Press, 1980, 351 pp., $14.95

Reviewed by Peter Penner

Mennonite missionary history is the richer for two new scholarly works, James Juhnke's *A People of Mission,* which tells the story of the General Conference outreach, and Theron Schlabach's *Gospel Versus Gospel,* which presents the "homeside" dynamic behind the mission of the (Old) Mennonite Church.

By ending his book at World War Two, just when the Mennonite Church stood on the threshold of the "recovery of the Anabaptist Vision," Schlabach has been able to do justice to an analysis and interpretation of the sources in congregational life and external stimuli for the theories and policies behind outreach. Leaders, boards, policies, and institutions during eighty years emerge from the bountiful archival material. For the General Conference, Juhnke successfully though briefly covered the entire range of outreach from beginnings in the 1860s. He managed in just over 200 pages to give an account of both the sending and receiving church: the latter Schlabach left to the imagination. Though some readers may see this as unfortunate, Schlabach did not set out to tell the full story of the results abroad, as Juhnke did.

Though Juhnke's book is not without expert analysis, Schlabach's appears to be more the work of a social scientist who has used sociological tools including quantification, the results of detailed work by a number of assistants. By resorting to quantification in the last two chapters, he achieved a synoptic overview of Mennonite Church home missions. Those who prefer the more narrative style used by Juhnke will find these chapters somewhat torturous as the prose chases twenty-two "exhibits" to illustrate the home mission "starts" and "stops." Alternatively, Juhnke provided the usual maps (6) and photographs (15), as well as a complete list of General Conference missionaries who have gone out from North American congregations.

Each book has a story line, of course. Juhnke's is easier to follow as his characters and "giants" (whom Schlabach cut down to size) take on vitality and wholeness because they are fully embodied within the context of a life's work. In Schlabach's work they are given names and sometimes even a little profile, but the giantology form of writing which some will expect kept entirely subordinate to a thematic approach. Whereas in Juhnke's book P. A. Penner, Edmund G. Kaufman, and C. H. Sukkau come to life as believable characters, in the Mennonite Church history the Benders, Brunks, Hersheys, Kauffmans, Lapps, and Stauffers come on stage long enough to enunciate some principle at a critical point and then disappear. Only John S. Coffman, John F. Funk, Joseph D. Graber, and Sanford C. Yoder stand out. Schlabach has taken for granted knowledge about Mennonite Church leadership. As one who attended S. F. Coffman's daily vacation Bible school in Vineland, Ontario, in the 1930s, I would have welcomed a little more flesh and blood on Schlabach's bare-bones treatment of Mennonite Church mission strategy makers, and I daresay other readers will think this also. Perhaps a biographical appendix would help. On the other hand, what could be more graphic than the description of C.F. Derstine as "the popular, premillenialist, Fundamentalistic Mennonite revivalist"? Perhaps some existing work can tell us how he acquired these characteristics.

Juhnke ranged over the Oklahoma, India, China, and Zaire fields of endeavor in a way that Schlabach did not. But he stopped midway in his book to analyze the sending church in a fashion more characteristic of Schlabach's approach and for the same period. Juhnke's book also takes the reader to Latin America and Asia and treats the decolonization period. The treatment is brief, but complete and eminently satisfying. For the benefit of the uninitiated, Schlabach provided a sweeping overview of missionary history, including the early Anabaptist successes. He then turned to one of the chief emphases of his book: the loss of that Anabaptist vision and zeal, and its replacement with several versions of American Protestantism—not least a narrow fundamentalism.

Schlabach then proceeded to sort out the long quest for centralized authority in a church separated into regional conferences spreading from Virginia to Pennsylvania and to Indiana and beyond. The next theme is all-absorbing preoccupation with the making of institutions: hospitals, city missions in Chicago and Youngstown, and the "homeside" planning of paternalist institutions—so characteristic of all nineteenth century missions abroad—for India, Argentina, and eventually Africa. Because the methods employed and the supporting policy-principles were so based on American models of the time, Mennonite Church leaders faced the acute problem of reconciling these with their own understanding of what the "all things" in the Great Commission meant. Were missionaries obligated to teach Mennonite distinctives with respect to attire, the ordinances as taught by Daniel Kauffman in his *Manual* (various editions between 1898 and 1928) as well as the full application of nonresistance?

About 1914 the Mennonite Church consensus demanded "replica" churches overseas rather than attempting any accommodation to particular cultural settings. Though they wished to maintain wholeness of identity abroad, they had already compromised their Anabaptist principles at home in the period from the Civil War to the Great War of 1914. In fact, Schlabach made the point that to achieve respectability after 1864, Mennonite Church people listened to the "drumbeats" of the North, taking on norms, assumptions, and many doctrinal propositions foreign to traditional Mennonite understandings of the gospel. Even in methodology, Mennonites of both camps were borrowers rather than researchers. Nothing from the thorough scholarship evident here suggests that Mennonite mission leadership sought to learn from the successes and failures, for example, of the Church Missionary Society in India with its vaunted "three-selfs" formula for indigenization.

Nevertheless, not all was lost. One of the saving aspects of both the Mennonite and General Conference Mennonite churches was the tension within each denomination between conservative and more liberal leaders, for example, between E. G. Kaufman's Bethel College and C. H. Sukkau's outlook and between Lancaster County and "liberal" Goshen College. As a result, concern for Mennonite distinctives never died out. In the struggle for identity, some always managed to incorporate the best of the past.

Though Schlabach's work seems to demand more attention because of his thematic and sociological approach, both books focus the same issues to a remarkable degree. Both ask why Mennonites so readily absorbed so much of North American fundamentalism and neglected or compromised Anabaptist principles. Both also recognize that Ameri-

can evangelical influences drove Mennonites to consider mission at all. Mennonites "quickened" by the American revival began to think of mission and then later began to recover lost Anabaptist ground.

These two books succeed as scholarly works and achieve what they promised. What is more, both authors appended valuable bibliographical essays which accurately reflect the state of Mennonite scholarship, at least in the Mennonite and General Conference Mennonite churches. Both historians (Schlabach in a more articulated way) are committed to a Christian viewpoint; both stand in the "Anabaptist-vision school" of historical writing. While Juhnke hardly ended on a moralistic note, Schlabach could scarcely refrain from passing judgment in every chapter's final summary statement. For one who does not claim that the historical tools can adequately test whether the will of God has been done in history, he seems sure that the Anabaptist way, if tried in the period covered, would have left a different print on the missionary footpath.

After all is said and done, are these works readable or will they simply survive as reference tools for scholars? Schlabach has an arresting style, though his prose reflects a social scientific orientation and "in" language of the day. While a democratic view of language indulges everyman's "cockney," it hardly dignifies Mennonite board decisions about money to use language borrowed from the gaming tables or TV commercials, or to write of "chipping in" (101) a "hefty amount" (125). He seems to use as shorthand an inordinate number of hyphenated adjectives such as "contacts-for-verbal-evangelism argument" (130). The torturous clause "whether [mission] had not ought to work more by . . ." (95) seems entirely out of character. By comparison Juhnke's prose is good measured English, almost sedate, which will be readable for a long time.

These strictures do not detract from the intrinsic and long-term value of these works for the Mennonites most directly involved and for followers of the missionary theme in history.

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Successful Discipling. By Allen Hadadian. Chicago: Moody Press, 1979, 176 pp., $3.95 (pb)

Reviewed by Floyd G. Bartel

Allen Hadadian is an associate pastor to a college department at Grace Community Church of the Valley in Sun Valley, California. He previously worked on the staff of Campus Crusade for Christ in campus ministries.

His book, *Successful Discipling,* describes in detail a plan for one-on-one nurture of new Christians by more mature Christians. This basic pattern for nurture is one that could be used far more than it is.

This book is easy reading—being broken up into short sections with a prominent heading for each. At the same time, it is repetitious. It seems to be written around a detailed outline. While this makes material easier to relocate, it makes the book somewhat uninteresting reading.

It makes a number of "how-to" suggestions and could serve quite well as a book for beginning this type of discipling ministry where there has not been one. It describes a process but lacks enough autobiographical reference to help the process come alive in a particular setting.

The book's greatest weakness is the highly individualistic view of Christianity it reflects. The church is referred to only as something to attend. Almost entirely missing, therefore, is any discussion of the important ongoing support system for such a discipling ministry that a local congregation must provide. This weakness probably reflects the author's experience in a parachurch organization.

The last chapter does introduce the possibility of bringing people together in small groups for discipling. This is the closest Hadadian comes to putting discipling into the context of a caring community.

I looked for more illustrations out of real-life experience to bring the book to life. The one-on-one discipling idea is an excellent one. It reminded me of the Paul-Timothy, Eunice-Lois, Teacher-Disciple programs a number of our Mennonite congregations have been developing. Is someone ready to describe these for us in greater detail?

Floyd G. Bartel is Secretary for Congregational Mission for the General Conference Mennonite Church.

The Prince Still Smiled: Amazing Love Breaks Through a Cambodian Family's Night of Terror. By Carl Lawrence, Wheaton, Illinois: Tyndale House Publishers, 1979, 132 pp., $2.95 (pb)

Reviewed by Larry Kehler

In 1970 United States President Richard Nixon and national security advisor Henry Kissinger secretly enlarged USA's involvement in the Indochina war to include Cambodia. In the process they helped bring about the fall of the Cambodian leader, Prince Norodom Sihanouk who, according to some observers, almost single-handedly had succeeded in maintaining Cambodia's neutrality in a sea of conflict. With the Prince gone and with the new Prime Minister, Lon Nol, showing more aptitude for allowing his cabinet ministers and military officers to get rich than for providing good leadership, the weak and demoralized Khmer Rouge (communists) finally had the opportunity they had been waiting for to make their pitch to the Cambodian people for support. Prince Sihanouk threw his weight behind the Khmer Rouge, and it became a force which soon struck fear into the hearts of Lon Nol's army.

The communists made steady military gains, but at heavy costs in lives on both sides. In April 1975 the Khmer Rouge's black-clad troops, sullen and young, marched into Phnom Penh. One of the "liberating army's" first acts was to evacuate the capital, whose population had swollen to perhaps 2,000,000 during the waning months of the war. Everyone was forced to leave. Those who faltered in the forced trek back to the countryside because of disease, weakness, or for any other reason were shot, clubbed to death, or bayonetted. Within two weeks of their victorious entry into Phnom Penh the Pol Pot forces were forcibly evacuating most other villages and towns throughout the nation to lay the foundation for their totally "new society."

The Prince Still Smiled is the account of a Christian Khmer family's experience during this upheaval. Chea Aim, a gem merchant, and his family lived in a town of about 400 people. With Chea were his wife, Kolab, and three children. By the time the tragic tale ended, only Kolab and her twelve-year-old son, Khom, were alive. Chea was blown up by a mine just when he was ready to cross the frontier into Thailand during the family's escape from its homeland.

By the time Chea and Kolab and their children were able to leave the work camp to which they had been force-marched, the village's original population of over 400 had shrunk hideously through executions and disease. Only about half a dozen adult men were left. In the graveyard near the work camp bodies were buried on top of each other because so many had died and because the survivors became too weak to dig individual graves. Understandably, some of the surviving people, including Kolab, lost their minds.

Thinking that if America only knew about their plight it would come to the Cambodians' aid, Chea devised a clever scheme to escape. Weak and fearful, he finally found his way to a refugee camp on the Thai border. Journalists came to hear his story, but they were skeptical. "Refugees are notorious for condemning the country which they have left," seemed to be the journalists' response. Chea was deeply distraught by their callous disregard for the problems of his people, but he was even more disillusioned to discover that the United States had pulled out of Indochina totally, even out of Thailand. Chea is described as a strong believer in nonviolence, but one of the dreams which kept him alive during the daily dawn-to-dusk ordeal in the work camp was the hope that when the USA finally heard what was happening to them, it would come to their rescue. Now, to his horror, he discovered that the rest of the world didn't even believe their story. It seemed not to care.

Despite clear instruction not to leave the refugee camp, he returned to Cambodia to bring back his beloved wife and their two remaining children. He found them, and they made the hazardous journey back through the jungle, avoiding numerous Khmer Rouge patrols. Their two-year-old daughter, Chean Penh, died enroute. Kolab, in the meantime, recovered much of her emotional equilibrium. Only she and son Khom finally reached the safety of the refugee camp in Thailand.

The story of Chea Aim and his family is grippingly told by Carl Lawrence, the director of programming for the Far East Broadcasting Company. We know now that the gruesome accounts which came out of postwar Kampuchea after Pol Pot assumed power were true. Lawrence's portrait of these Christian believers is realistic and believable. Their faith undoubtedly helped them survive, but they are not pictured as super-saints.

In some places Lawrence has allowed Western issues to intrude into the story. His comments about Chea's insistence on being the head of the family and doing the discipling sounds more like a plug for Bill Gothard's "chain of command" theories than an actual Asian concern. The rekindling of romantic thoughts about Kolab while Chea made his first trip to the Thai border are out of place. One wonders also if Lawrence didn't intend the story to carry some political freight, slapping the United States on the wrist for pulling out of the war too soon.

The story is a heart-rending account of love and family responsibility being put to an unbelievable test. It is so powerful a tale that it doesn't need the addition of any special romantic interests or political moralizing to draw the reader along. On the whole, Lawrence showed restraint.

Toward the end of his account the author related how one of the four journalists who heard Chea's story at the refugee camp finally began to take the reports of the refugees more seriously and to write more empathetically about their experience. Lawrence didn't name the journalist, although he did say he was British. Likely the reference was to William Shawcross, who indeed has done much to help bring the Kampucheans' tragic tale to the world's attention through various news and interpretative articles and also through a book which I recommend to anyone who has a concern about Kampuchea, *Sideshow: Kissinger, Nixon, and the Destruction of Cambodia* (New York: Simon and Schuster, 1979, 464 pp.; also available in a Pocket Books edition).

People who wish more firsthand details about the devastation caused in Kampuchea after the takeover of the Pol Pot regime in 1975 should read Father Francois Ponchaud's book, *Cambodia: Year Zero* (New York: Holt, Rinehart, and Winston, 1978; also available in a Penguin edition).

The title of Lawrence's book, *The Prince Still Smiled,* is a reference to a statue of a smiling Prince Sihanouk in Chea's home village. Engraved in gold on the base of the ten-foot figure were the words: "The pain of their subjects, and not their own pain, is the sadness of kings."

Larry Kehler is pastor of Charleswood Mennonite Church, Winnipeg, Manitoba. He formerly was editor of The Mennonite.

THOUGHTS IN NAZARETH ON THE FESTIVAL OF THE ANNUNCIATION

Guest Editorial

Several weeks have passed since March 25, the festival of the Annunciation. Yet I find myself continuing to reflect on the meaning of the incarnation for mission today—both here where "the word became flesh" and elsewhere.

On the feast day I attended mass at the basilica in town which marks the traditional spot where Gabriel shared the good news with Mary. The event of the annunciation provides the inspiration for all the ancient churches in Nazareth whether Roman, Greek, Catholic, Orthodox or Coptic, and all bear the name of "the church of the annunciation." The basilica is a new modern structure of dressed limestone and marble. Its bronze doors recall scenes in the life of Jesus, the windows of stained glass have been skillfully executed, and the majestic cupola towers overhead.

There I sat in the packed upper-level parish church under the outstretched arms of a steel and goldleaf madonna which is the gift of the United States Catholic churches. Around the walls of the upper church are panels from communities around the world depicting the annunciation or the madonna and child in an idiom appropriate to its land of origin. A large oriental madonna dressed in a kimona of pearls, the contribution from Japan, gazes down on the worshipers from the other side of the church. Our American madonna is stark and harsh, but perhaps more faithfully represents a materialistic, industrial nation than I would like to admit.

Aspects of the service ring true to the subject of the feast. The liturgy is in Arabic so people can understand and the sermon includes a reference to John 3:16 which impresses me. But then the formality, the pomp and the vestments, while I can appreciate them and feel that we evangelicals are impoverished in our informal and leisurely approach to worship, somehow do not resonate with the thought of God taking our flesh and living in a small, dirty hill village in Galilee of the gentiles. And the roar of the P.A. system gone amuck further clashes with the gentle unassuming entry of God into our world.

Many local people have expressed to me their questions and their anger about such an expensive shrine when the money could have been used, as they see it, to help the poor. But Rome and the custodians of the holy places deem it more important to rebuild on the site of earlier churches an edifice that would commemorate and proclaim the mystery and the truth of the incarnation.

Here I am—a missionary—the word in Arabic, "Mubashir" is so beautiful. It means literally "teller of good news." It's a beautiful thought, but how do I go about it? Oh, I can preach to the patients in the hospital or teach a Bible lesson to nursing students, but does our presence and our ministry resonate with the fact of the incarnation? I look around at the local evangelical mission churches in town. Each little group has done a remarkable job of "incarnating" (if I might use that word without debasing it) the culture, worship patterns and theology of the home church in America or Europe. And their tiny congregations dutifully follow the patterns of the patronizing mission. And I wonder where the incarnation is in all of this? Somehow the ancient churches with their centuries of wisdom and experience may be closer to the incarnation than these upstart mission churches.

Even here at the Nazareth Hospital where our motto is to heal the sick and preach the gospel in the manner of our Lord, we seem unable to bring together into a whole the world of medicine and the ministry of spiritual healing. The hospital moves in the direction of a secular facility with token remembrance that this is a mission hospital. And I am not against the changes that are taking place here. We must be aware of the fact that most local persons working here are here only because it is a place of employment and the foreigners who do come out of some sense of Christian calling cannot communicate with the people they are caring for. How far we too seem from reflecting the blessed incarnation.

My reaction is to want to run away, to abandon the idea of mission. It all seems so impossible. People here do not seem to have the same inner needs that we western introspective persons have. The barriers to really communicating the message seem so many and so big. And we who call ourselves missionaries are so limited and inept. We are products too of our own culture and can never fully identify here. It all seems so futile and our best efforts insignificant. Yes, I would like to leave it all.

But the basilica bells continue to ring out, day after day, reminding me that my doubts and questions cannot change the fact of the incarnation. God did become flesh. He lived among us and we beheld his glory. At least I as a Christian affirm this though it is not shared with my Jewish or Muslim neighbor. And while the incarnation remains a mystery to me, a believer, and though it is either sacrilege or an affront to others, that event still stands as the model of how God crosses the barriers between heaven and earth.

And I leave the basilica and return home through the garbage-strewn streets of Nazareth and from deep within me rises a cry—"Lord, I believe; help my unbelief."

—Joseph Haines, Nazareth Israel

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MISSION FOCUS

The Shape of Mission

DAVID A. SHANK

The shape of Jesus Christ's mission for his people in a given place and time emerges out of their understanding of and response to his ministry to them, and out of his work among the nations as he judges them in view of the salvation to which he calls all people. Here is one attempt at such a bifocal discernment for the worldwide mission of the (North American) Mennonite Church for the 1980s if God wills to grant us that time.

What is emerging among the nations that would shape our worldwide mission?

Our worldwide mission has emerged out of a century of church-world dialogues, each with its crisis and its partial resolution. The first was our ethnic and rural confrontation with American society; it was partially resolved through American denominational structures and disciplines and institutions. The second was a crisis of faith in the context of the fundamentalist-liberal polarization of American Christianity; it was partially resolved through the "rediscovery of the Anabaptist vision" (Bender, 1944; Hershberger, 1957). The third was due to our ethnic reshuffling and more active involvement with the larger Christendom. This has been partially resolved through the believers church model (Garret, 1969:250-283) used as a criterion for a self-study (Kauffman and Harder, 1975) and for seminary (Bender, 1971) and Sunday school curricula. We are only now becoming seriously aware of the next crisis before us, our international involvement with macrostructures which have provided us with religious and political freedom, economic freedom and prosperity, and social positions which are perceived by others to be oppressive.

During the first of those crises we began to work among a Hindu population in India, among a Europeanized population in Latin America's Argentina, and among tribal peoples of East Africa in Tanganyika.

During the second crisis after the second world war, as a result of the *pax americana* and an unequalled prosperity from an expanding economy, we participated in a most amazing development of worldwide mission for church building, as well as relief and service. An American presence in Asia permitted our entry into China and Japan; and we began work in Bihar in northern India. As a consequence of the war, we entered Europe in six different countries in view of planting churches in that post-Christian society. Special concerns sent us to Israel and Algeria, also known to be "hard places" of mission. A rapid explosion took us into five African countries and ten Central and South American countries. Increased American presence in Asia took us into Vietnam, Hong Kong, and the Philippines. Relief and service activity in many more countries moved from war relief to crisis relief to development strategies. Without seeking to plant churches, they occasionally

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grew out of such work, and relations developed often beyond the scope of relief. Our experiences took us into more than thirty countries in a quarter of a century for church building somewhat along the lines of the Anabaptist vision. It helped to precipitate our third crisis, that of ecclesiology.

Our patterns of involvement were extremely varied: they included many different kinds of "calls" as well as our own "looking out upon the fields white with harvest." Seeking the guidance of the Holy Spirit, we were led intuitively and often creatively in the light of our own special gifts and resources, marrying a strong sense of mission with the appeals and with what we perceived as needs. The pattern that emerged would perhaps appear incoherent from any other perspective; if there was a strategy it appears to have emerged spontaneously from our faith and life and obedience.

From this work have emerged new Mennonite churches in some thirty countries (Horsch, 1978). In 1977 over 300 North Americans were working among these churches, their institutions, and their more than 29,000 members (one North American for nearly one hundred foreign members, on the average). But an additional 250 persons were working in thirty other countries in well-established non-Mennonite structures: churches, schools, governments. During the past twenty years another pattern has been emerging of relationship to movements which are often not organized along Western lines nor well-recognized by Western and mission-planted churches.

We tried in our world mission to be equally sensitive to the double challenges of "into all the world and preach the gospel" and "unto the least of these my brethren." We did not generally seek missionary success measured by numbers, often choosing consciously to go to difficult areas of witness and ministry. As a church we had to learn to relate to sister churches rather than to "mission fields." We shifted to short-term assignments as compared to the long-term missionary, while still keeping a solid core of the latter. We have had to face the awareness of large numbers of the world's populations being urbanized. We have had to learn to deal with the new fact of the worldwide presence of the Christian church and the reality of ecumenicity.

The resolution of our crises in America did not always appear adequate for praxis in situations of world mission. The Anabaptist vision was sometimes felt to be too ethnically oriented; the believers church model often seemed too Western because it assumed—as in sixteenth century Europe—a *kirchliche* backdrop against which the "faithful congregation" stands. Our ethical concerns of nonparticipation in army, magistracy, or the courts often appeared as appendages to the gospel even though we wanted to become a peace church also on the mission field. Leadership roles in the international world of relief and missions were often felt to be much more complicated socially, politically, and ethnically than in the "simple" contexts of Pennsylvania, Virginia, Ontario, Indiana, Kansas, or Saskatchewan. We appear to have lost our theological and ethical innocence abroad; meanwhile our churches at home were catching up with the foreign workers while retaining elements of each of the preceding crises.

On the other hand an increased awareness of the work of the Holy Spirit contributed to a flexibility and mobility; we learned both to go and to go home to be faithful. The Holy Spirit has also spoken to us through the experiences

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of China, Vietnam, and Somalia. And the Spirit has come in newness of power to many of our people at home and abroad. He is teaching us to take the pre-cross incarnation of Christ as an essential part of the good news. New leadership patterns are emerging with greater recognition of charisma among fellow members.

Out of divergent strands appears to be emerging again a new consensus of thought and practice for the mission of the church; it has been formulated recently in *A Theology of Mission in Outline* (Mennonite Board of Missions, 1978). Appearing to fulfill the Anabaptist and believers church models in a more universal and comprehensive perspective, the outline shows Christian mission as being essentially a messianic movement under the leadership of the risen suffering-servant, in the power of his Spirit, communicating the gospel of peace through messianic communities. The document was intended as an expression of missionary consensus; to the extent which it also expresses a consensus of our North American congregations, we might speak of the presence of a strong biblically oriented and Christological ongoing sense of mission, seen as messianic consciousness. (To the extent that this is only a **missionary** consensus, and not that of the sending congregations, the major task of Mennonite Church leadership at all levels is the overcoming of that duality.) This *sine qua non* of mission seems to be shaping our mission out of our own life under God.

What is emerging among us as a people that is significant for our worldwide mission?

Ultimately, the East-West tensions, the North-South structural inequities, ecological breakdown, techtronics, nuclear power, the armaments race, and racial discrimination and conflict all shape worldwide mission as emergents from an apocalyptic context; but others have been assigned to speak about these and other major questions. Here I draw attention to three major realities which have emerged and are seen to be shaping our mission essentially as fact and as challenge.

Emergence of Christianity worldwide.

The first of these facts is that the Christian church in its many forms is now to be found in almost every geographical region and political entity around the world. This is already a major factor in the reshaping of missionary strategy by Western churches and their missiologists. Since the political independence and decolonization of many nations, we have had difficulty—quite understandably—getting beyond the agenda of redefining authority and structure, patterns of request and response, priority use of resources, and even the agenda itself.

Most of us are not overtly aware of the patterns of the emergence of the world church. Although there are important exceptions, the planting of the church around the world has usually not been because of penetration and conversion of Hindu, Buddhist, or Islamic populations. On the contrary, the expansion of the faith has occurred among the so-called anamist and tribal peoples of the world. Increasingly termed "primal" because of common basic or elemental religious and societal patterns, such peoples have furnished over the centuries the large majority of Christian converts. The Christian faith first swept as a movement among such peoples of the Mediterranean world. Although their culture had become sophisticated, their religion was primal. Their culture became the carrier of the faith which then moved in a second large wave among the tribes of Europe. In a third wave, the European and Western culture has been the carrier of the faith to the so-called primal peoples of Oceania, Africa, the Amerindians, and among significant groups in areas of India and Southeast Asia.

Dr. Alan Tippet wrote, *It is a fact of global significance that the great animist world is "turning over" like an iceberg in our day and taking up a new position which may be a determining factor in world history for the next century. Whether we like it or not, millions of people are changing from something old to something new . . . culturally and spiritually this is their "fulness of time"* (Turner, 1973:337). Where we Mennonites have touched this reality in our own world mission, we have seen its effects. Seventy percent of non-North American Mennonites come from our mission to Africa. If the classical religious systems of the world still remain essentially intact and have even assumed an aggressive missionary stance in our time, it is the primal peoples worldwide that have turned to Christianity and are making of it a worldwide reality.

Emergence of new religious movements.

The second equally important fact, which has not received the same attention in missiological circles, is the parallel emergence in primal societies worldwide of close to 10,000 new religious movements past and present, involving presently an estimated 10,000,000 people. These movements are spin-offs of Western missionary endeavors and from the cultural crises provoked by the colonial and cultural dominance of the West. Much more than is generally recognized, these groups are a major continuing missionary responsibility of the Western churches; if we had not gone to them, they would not exist as an identifiable phenomenon today.

Though important isolated attempts have been made to understand such movements in view of communicating the Christian gospel, most of the attention given to such movements has been by other (often non-Christian) scholars—anthropologists, ethnologists, sociologists, phenomenologists, historians of religion. There have been occasional serious efforts at having Western missionaries work for or within some of the Christian-oriented movements, but one can scarcely say that the challenge indicated by Dr. Harold Turner has been met: *By extending the horizon to the further areas we have mentioned, and especially to the fascinating realm of new religious movements among tribal peoples . . . the Christian world may discover that far from being over, the great age of missions—of missions more varied and complex than we have ever envisaged—is just beginning* (1973).

My summary of our own worldwide involvement does not include the story of our Mennonite relationship to this phenomenon (Shenk, 1975). It would have to start in the 1940s with J. W. Shank's confrontation with the pentecostal-type movement which had exploded among the Toba Indians in the Argentine Chaco, and Albert and Lois Buckwalter's new relationship to that reality in 1955. It would include Edwin and Irene Weaver's involvement in Uyo, Nigeria, after 1959; Mennonite Central Committee's Teachers Abroad Program (TAP) and the European pacifist service program, EIRENE, involvement with the Kimbanguists in the Congo after 1968; the involvement of Stanley and Delores Friesen, Willard and Alice Roth, and Erma Grove in Accra (Ghana); B. Charles and Grace

Hostetter's work in Lagos (Nigeria) during six years after 1970; and work of Harold and Christine Wenger in Swaziland since 1975, not to mention that of the (Mennonite) Africa Inter-Mennonite Mission. Suffice it to say that Mennonites at the present time probably have a broader and more varied experience of this reality on two continents than perhaps any other group in the West. Our involvement has come at a time when we were not so much bound by the inheritance from the colonial period, since we had been latecomers to the modern missionary scene.

Some observers have too hastily described this particular reality as "modern messianic movements" (Lanternari, 1963; Oosterwal, 1973). Much of it cannot be so easily classified. Most of the movements, however, are engaged in the resolution of the crises created by the brutal confrontation of two cultural and religious systems, one of which was perceived as dominant and oppressive. This is, indeed, the concern of most messianic movements. The connection between these movements and Christianity is not only that the latter has come to them as culturally oppressive—like the rider of a dragon being thrown in a china shop—but that Christianity, at least at the time of its genesis, was itself a messianic movement.

It emerged in response to a religious and cultural clash in which oppression and domination by another culture with its religious and political forces threatened the faith, life, and identity of a small ethnic group which called itself Israel after the head of its tribes. And "in the fullness of time, God sent forth his Son."

Emergence of secular faith.

The third major fact which has emerged and in which we are involved is the faith of secularity and its alliance with political, economic, and techtronic power. The allusion is not exclusively to the two-thirds of the world's populations living under avowed Marxist or Maoist regimes, but—particularly for us—to the same realities as they function in the West. This new secular techtronic culture appears less and less to be a carrier of the Christian faith and more and more that of secularity, itself a major challenge to the Christian faith. Thus among primal peoples, for example, it is possible in one generation to pass from the sacralism of traditional society to the liberation of secularism, and then that projected into the latter's new sacralism without benefit of the liberating power of the gospel of Christ. There is also the deprivation of the freely called-out messianic community with its capacity for a lived-out critique and protest which can offer new and nondestructive patterns of hope in the midst of the new sacral oppression.

In the West itself, likely the pioneering "advances" in the technological restructuring of humanity will continue to be an overbearing super-culture with its own secular faith and **imperium** imposing itself upon a Christian minority, while the center of Christian faith will shift, as it already is doing. The super-culture will likely continue to spread around the world and not limit its imposition to the West. North America and Europe will no doubt continue to be the scene where this culture's "advances" will first appear on the scene of history and where confrontation with this new imperialism must first occur. This is, at least geographically speaking from the perspective of the Mount of Olives, "the uttermost part of the world." We are there.

How do these various elements shape our mission at this time?

We have seen four major factors: an awareness that the mission of the church is fulfilled through a messianic consciousness of servant communities of the Servant Messiah, emerging ever anew out of the confrontation of Christ and his Spirit with humankind in its ceaseless ambition and search for happiness; Mennonite existence as a North American Christian denomination in an increasingly oppressive techtronic society with its secular faith and myth of self-fulfillment; the emergence of a worldwide Christianity, much of it planted with Western pressures rather than an indigenous dynamic; and indigenous religious movements among primal peoples—themselves a spin-off of Western and Christian missionary expansion—seen as missionary opportunity.

These are all parts of a whole, and one is forced constantly to stretch to see the whole as a pattern or shape. Where does one find adequate categories for understanding? Such an ordering can come from the phenomenon of messianism, defined as *essentially the religious belief in the coming of a redeemer who will put an end to the present order of things either universally or for a particular group and will install a new order made of justice and happiness* (Kohn, 1933). This on one hand can be seen as an essential universal archetype underlying all human experience (Desroche, 1969). On the other hand it is a unique religious phenomenon, a *sui generis* (Oosterwal, 1973; Desroche, 1969). We are students of Mennonitism and of Christianity—sub-species and species of a genus, if one may be permitted the comparison. But we know much less of the genus—messianism—from which they issue. Sophistication, secularism, and reaction to the extravagances in our own history may in fact immunize against the germ which made the immunization culture grow. But wherever Christianity goes with its Scriptures, it will be a precipitator of messianism, even when it has itself lost the essential thrust.

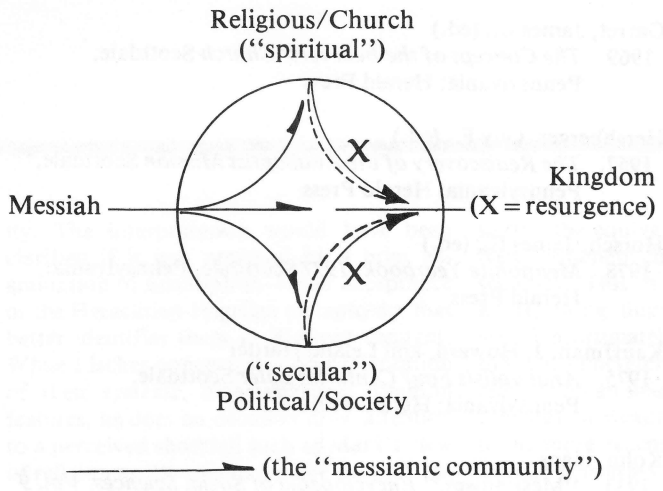
The basic dynamics of messianism may be described as follows (Desroche, 1973: 141ff.):

1. In the midst of oppression, domination, and injustice, a personality appears as God's instrument promising a new humanity (creation, kingdom, order) seen as a holistic reality of religious, social, economic, and political life.

2. The followers which break with the old order create in so doing new communities, themselves a critique of the old order and a foreshadowing of the new.

3. When the new humanity fails to appear, the initial impetus wanes and the movement "splits up" into a religious and a political (and social and economic) sidetracking away from the original holistic thrust. Each sidetrack becomes in itself a movement which reinterprets the original holistic intent from the new perspective, often continuing with long life.

4. Passage of time, new conditions, inadequacies, and rediscovery of the initial *élan* may lead to a messianic resurgence, from either of—or both—the sides of the sidetracking which is redirected towards the original thrust. Such resurgences are then seen to be points of continuity in the messianic fulfillment.



This is not strictly a description of Christianity but of the dynamics of the messianic genre wherever it appears. Since Christianity—and Mennonites—are of the genre, such dynamics are inherent to our life and faith. Wherever the Christian faith is present a four-directional emergence will usually develop by virtue of its inherent dynamics.

Christianity has, of course, its own specific understandings: Jesus of Nazareth as Messiah, his special kind of suffering-servant messianism, a unique way of dealing with failure, its jubilee and *shalom* understanding of the new creation, and its own answers to perennial human problems of family, sexuality, death, disaster, and personal eschatology. But this does not eliminate the essential dynamics of the four-directional emergence. This is a confirmation of the sixteenth century Anabaptists' production of the believers church model, but places it in a broader context as messianic resurgence. It also suggests that our own rediscovery of the Anabaptist vision, and of the believers church model, was a form of messianic resurgence. It is no accident that our greatest missionary expansion as a North American Mennonite Church was parallel with the renewal of our roots, themselves an expression of messianic resurgence.

In this light, the major question is not, "What is emerging?" Four patterns are emerging: religious affirmation of oppression, domination, injustice, and human cultural establishments; church building seen as a strictly religious way of dealing with **inevitable** problems of human existence now and hereafter; political (and social and economic) shifts in society—both reformatory and revolutionary—which deal with the **evitable**; and messianic holistic re-creating of religious, social, and economic life under political authority of Messiah—present among his people but as a call for all peoples.

The essential question faced by a messianic movement over and over again under new conditions is, "Which emergence shall we pursue?"

For North American Mennonites faced with the phenomenon of our own history, of our own situation in the world today, and the worldwide challenge to mission, the essential question is whether we can affirm unequivocally that we want to identify with the direction of a messianic holistic re-creation, which is not always observable along denominational lines. The Mennonite theology of mission which describes Christian mission as messianic movement oriented by the coming kingdom could appear to illustrate an additional turning of the helm in that direction.

That kind of resurgence in North America is absolutely crucial to world mission. Whatever success we have in our confrontation with the secular techtronic culture in its imperialism in North America will have crucial meaning for Christians anywhere else in the world who will by virtue of that imperium be forced to confront that same reality. Failure in that messianic confrontation reduces the possibility of a worldwide mission, for we have then only become a part of that indelicate—and riderless—monster.

If the politics and economics of world poverty constitute a major human problem today, we cannot fulfill our worldwide mission by simply exploiting in our country those structures of poverty for others. A messianic community concerned also about economic wholeness would work to reduce in its midst large differentials in personal spending, made possible by the divergencies of demand and supply, based on a culture of affluent self-indulgence rather than on human need. It would work at noninvolvement in production of, merchandising of, and consumption of superficial self-indulgence goods. Such efforts would only be preludes to a possible critique of neo-colonial economic structures which enable such self-indulgent consumption. As long as those structures are perceived to be necessary for the maintenance of a given lifestyle and our resources for world mission, we have no valid messianic mission to people oppressed by those structures.

The recent General Conference Mennonite Church consultation on tax refusal in the light of current armament production and consumption—including preparation for nuclear war—reflects the type of messianic concern which can also validate worldwide Christian mission. Such confrontations can be seen as signs of hope for others as well as patterns of life which can stimulate concern and action in the rest of the world.

This tack in North America at the present time needs to be fulfilled with the help of missionaries of Japanese, African, Indian, or Latin American origins, who from their perspectives must be called to "come over . . . and help us." Such people need to function for extended periods in congregational and institutional contexts. They too can help us better understand and discern our world mission, both at home and abroad. This vision dates back to missionary conferences in the early part of this century; it still needs to be **done** as a part of our world mission.

The messianic dynamics throw light on the movements which constitute a major missionary task in primal societies. Understanding some of these dynamics in this light can also help to discern where and how to respond to such contexts. Each task is different in the light of directions of emergence. The special preparation required for such tasks also calls for missionaries who see their task as lifelong, though models might need to differ from area to area. The present situation of "fluidity" could indicate that the next decade or two, should God grant that time, would be especially important—perhaps unique—because of the openness of such movements. In the current post-colonial reshuffling, many of the Christian-oriented movements may find their way into relations with other Christian churches planted by the missions. Thus the task among primal movements could be more and more among the less Christian-oriented ones. But the need for the North American church to affirm this as a major assignment remains.

The worldwide Christian church, whose structures we often relate to in our sending of people abroad in non-Mennonite contexts, is by definition also caught up in the four-directional emergence. From the messianic perspective which our theology of mission affirms, we need to learn ever anew to discern into what contexts our workers are being sent, and the meaning of this for their understanding of their own tasks. Here, the believers church model—as distinct from the spiritualists, the theocrats, and the "folk church"—is still a valid tool for discernment, particularly when seen in the larger eschatological perspective of Messiah and his kingdom (Congar, 1975:95f; Cullman; Duquoc, 1972: 263ff; Moltmann, 1977, the fullest recent effort to give an eschatological perspective, the suffering-servant stance, in a context of Spirit empowered, messianic communities. His conclusions are not always shared by me, but his writing is instructive, particularly since he comes at it from the perspective of the *corpus christianum* tradition).

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From Undertone to Dominant Chord?

A Preliminary Snapshot of Mennonite Witness in the Netherlands

ALLE G. HOEKEMA

Twenty years ago N. van der Zijpp issued a pamphlet, *Lost Openness: From Mennonite Mission to Mennonite Isolation.*[1] The openness van der Zijpp spoke about is missionary zeal, the apostolic passion, that "compels members to share their spiritual possession with others who are outside" (p. 7). That passion has been lost since the sixteenth century. Following publication of this brochure, the Dutch Mennonite Mission Board discussed the possibility of issuing a sequel with the title "Recovered Openness." This sequel has never materialized. Was that a matter of external factors, or was it possibly also true that not enough openness had yet been regained? In 1980 we have to ask the same question: How open are we as a Mennonite people? Do we still have spiritual possession to share with others? This question must be discussed and answered within the congregation. Rigid rules need to be reviewed[2]; but first we should think through the principles and power of our faith.

Within this short article we can only begin to explore what such openness might mean. First of all we need to focus on—along with the van der Zijpp brochure—a few historical considerations and some facets of the present situation of our congregations. I suggest that the term "openness" is broader than what is often understood as "missionary" zeal. It concerns the total direction of the congregation.

The past: openness never totally lost

Van der Zijpp states that Mennonites since the seventeenth century withdrew into the limitation of their own circle "because they no longer possessed the faith and, therefore, lacked the courage and power which inspired and carried the generation of the martyrs."[3] That is a severe judgment for which finding supporting evidence is not difficult. First, the Anabaptists were inspired by a strong expectation of the end of the times, an expectation related to the social unrest of those times.[4] In the seventeenth century that eschatological expectation disappeared and made way for a more positive attitude toward society. This led to compromises with the state (expressed, for instance, by financial aid for the war effort in 1672). Much time was also devoted to building up the organization of the congregations.[5] Possibly a Mennonite form of Pietism—stemming from the theologically correct principle of the priesthood of each believer—produced a tendency toward isolation. The danger of this "individualistic atomism" was that it caused people to feel that it was absurd to claim to have "a word for the world."[6] Thus also the principle of nonresistance which had belonged to the confession of the church became "a spiritual virtue which everybody had the freedom to cultivate or not."[7]

The Enlightenment defined the attitude of Protestant churches in general in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries. Mission to the Gentiles did not fit into the picture people had. One was supposed to be tolerant toward those of another persuasion; and that principle gained ground among Mennonites also. Nevertheless, the eighteenth century became for Mennonites a century of decay of spiritual values and decline in numbers.[8] That is why it is so remarkable that in that very century Mennonites were actively involved in social care through their participation in all kinds of humanitarian institutions. And while this was still considered a field for private initiative, congregations engaged in extensive relief work, too. The year 1672 was disastrous for the Netherlands. Mennonites, who until then had shunned others, joined forces in helping not only persecuted co-religionists but groups such as the Hugenots as well.

That relief work resulted in the establishment of a Fund for Foreign Aid in 1710 which was active until 1758. It was dissolved in 1803.[9] It would be interesting to study whether the principle of nonresistance which was generally upheld by Mennonites in this period was nurtured by this care for and acquaintance with these foreign brothers in need. In any case, the principle of nonresistance was dead after 1800.[10] Because persecution on religious grounds had faded away, the Fund for Foreign Relief was disbanded and the remaining balances returned to the congregations. Apparently no one judged it necessary to keep the fund in existence to meet other needs abroad. Was this not the time of "liberty, equality, and fraternity?" We can learn nothing about how the congregations viewed the needs that resulted from the industrialization of the country. The Dutch Mennonite Conference, formed in 1811, took over the function of coordinating organ for the autonomous congregations which the fund had served. Thus attention shifted from openness outward to inward concerns.

Was the church in the nineteenth century unaware of what was happening outside its own circle? Among a small number of Mennonites interest in missions abroad grew, first through modest support of the Dutch Missionary Society, later through the establishment of an association to support the Baptist Missionary Society (of Great Britain). In 1847 they founded the Dutch Society for the Promotion of Missions in the Dutch Overseas Possessions (abbreviated Doopsgezinde Zendingsvereniging, D.Z.V.). Even though the D.Z.V. remained the work of a few people, it shows that during that period there were people within the brotherhood who realized that the closed circle needed to be broken.

A small monthly paper was issued between 1889 and 1919, *The Little Co-worker: Mennonite Monthly for Mission at Home and Abroad.*[11] It was intended for young people in the congregations—in itslef already a good thought—and the first issue clearly showed the connection between pro-

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moting the gospel abroad and at home. By publishing information about Russian and German Mennonites, it widened the reader's horizon. This was, to a certain extent, a matter of self-interest because Russian and German support—financially and through workers—kept the work of D.Z.V. going. This is another sign of spiritual poverty. In the period between 1900 and 1920 the work of the D.Z.V. indeed threatened to come to a halt—with the exception of the flourishing medical work—through a lack of vision on the part of both medical missionaries and mission board.[12]

Again, it is remarkable to see that in this same period when the Russian Mennonites were suffering as the result of the 1917 Revolution and the famine following, a relief program was established. Between 1920 and 1924 almost a quarter of a million guilders were collected and 1500 tons of material aid shipped. This was done in close cooperation with Mennonite Central Committee and other agencies like the Red Cross. Later the Dutch Mennonite Emigrant Committee was founded which gave more than a thousand Russian Mennonite refugees aid on their way to Canada or South America. At that time the peace witness began again to take shape through formation of the Workgroup for promoting fidelity to the principle of nonresistance among Mennonites. This was an admission that peace is a concern of the congregation and not merely a personal conviction of a few individuals.[15]

Drawing conclusions out of all this information is difficult. Van der Zijpp says, "In many respects the history of the Mennonites after the first heroic period is not exciting."[16] He is right. But, as we have seen, apparently there has always been an undercurrent present which recognized the need for openness. It must have been that undercurrent which guarded Mennonites against further decline in the past centuries. Missionary zeal, relief work, and peace witness alternated in strange waves. One seemed to be on the rise when another fell. Each of these types of witness has its limitations. Relief work favored particularly co-religionists—still a sort of closedness. The principle of nonresistance remained for a long time a principle without practical consequences. The Mission Board floated on the cork of the expatriate co-religionists; there was little thought about a specifically Mennonite approach to mission, and the link that existed at a certain moment between "inward and outward mission" receded into the background.

The present situation: not out of the woods

Concerning the closed character of the brotherhood, the period since World War 2 has indeed brought a number of changes. Insofar as change has to do with the organizations that foster openness, these have become more strongly rooted in the brotherhood and have expanded the area of work.

Relief work was initiated after 1945 through the existing Commission for Foreign Relief and converted in 1948 into a Fund for Special Needs both within and outside the Mennonite brotherhood. That new name, apparently indicating that needs within our own circle still took precedence, was fully justified. Relief in our own country and abroad come together in that name even though in fact it is primarily a matter of relief abroad.

The peace witness regained its voice through the founding of the Mennonite Peace Group in 1946. As with the relief work, North American Mennonites had an essential influence. The old Mission Society was handicapped by broken relations with Indonesia; that fact forced a rethinking. Since 1948 a representative of the A.D.S. (Algemene Doopsgezinde Societeit) has sat in on board meetings; in 1950 the name was changed.[18] in 1958 the Mission Society was recognized as a corporation within the brotherhood. Since then the mission is no longer a hobby of a few people but a task of the entire church. One could almost breathe a sigh similar to the one with which the oldest minute book of the D.Z.V. opened more than a century ago: "The peculiar state of our church with its low state of spiritual life explains sufficiently why the Dutch Mennonites have not earlier shown their interest in that blessed work."[19]

Finally, it must be recorded that the statutes of the D.Z.R. (Doopsgezinde Zendings Raad) in 1979 have been adapted in the sense that now the aim is "the proclamation of the Gospel in the whole world in accordance with the mission mandate of Jesus Christ." This implies that the mission mandate applies also to our own country.

Broadening of work resulted from contact with Mennonites abroad and with other churches in the Netherlands. Right after World War 2 the Dutch were confronted with the needs of refugees in Germany.[20] This led to cooperation between the Commission for Foreign Relief and Mennonite Central Committee and resulted in formation of the European International Organization for Relief Work. The peace work led to contacts with other so-called peace churches and in our country with the interdenominational organization, Church and Peace. The broadest cooperation internationally was reached in the work of the mission. Already in 1951 the European Mennonite Evangelization Committee (E.M.E.K.) came together—at that time also a sign of reconciliation.[21] This internationalizing was certainly important. It effected a stronger tie with the rest of the world brotherhood. Our thoughts and prejudices often received healthy correction through contact with Mennonites abroad.

Yet it seems to me that impulses toward renewal of goals and methods of mission and relief work have come more from ecumenical contacts in our own country than from the side of other European Mennonites who still have their own closed character. Thinking and planning within the World Council of Churches and within ecumenical agencies in our own country stimulated thinking about aid to developing countries. Thus in 1970 the Mennonite work group "Cooperation in Development" was created.[22]

The D.Z.R. owes much to world mission conferences. As a matter of fact, that was true already before the war. Cooperation through the Dutch Missionary Council with the Dutch Reformed Church in Irian Jaya has borne fruit. The Dutch Missionary Council continues to give valuable stimulus. The project "Mission in the Netherlands," for instance, established necessary links between "mission" (abroad) and "evangelization" (domestic).

One wonders why so few of these thoughts have penetrated into the brotherhood. Is it a matter of closedness that the work group "Cooperation in Development" is so little known (even disliked here and there)? And did not the project "Mission in the Netherlands" actually slide off the skin of the brotherhood? One would expect that out of a community of confessing members we could expect constructive criticism on such projects. But one gets the impression that most congregations have not studied these questions seriously. A. Mulder wrote in 1947 that "warm

interest and sacrifice among Mennonites only reach their maximum when it affects their own interests."[23] Surely, there has been some improvement; but the private ethic still seems to be the safest!

Genuine renewal up to the present is impeded by the lack of integration of the organizations that represent Mennonite openness toward the world. There is no opportunity to reflect together on the questions that are basic to such an open character, even though individuals have been pleading for this for thirty years. The D.Z.V. minutes indicate that already in 1947 the chairman of the A.D.S., Dr. W. F. Golterman, had thought about the integration of a number of agencies. His vision was "to dissolve the D.Z.V. as such and to replace it with a Society in which the original D.Z.V., A.D.S., Mennonite Youth Movement (D.J.B.), Committee for Brotherhood Work, Committee for Foreign Needs, and the Peace Movement would all participate, a kind of joint endeavor."[24] The special feature of this proposal was that, on the one hand, it drew the Peace Movement inside. On the other hand the Committee for Brotherhood Work which had stimulated the awareness of members of the congregations was also included. However, it appeared the time was not ripe for such an idea, not even in the Mission Society.

In 1963 the issue again arose at a mission conference about the relations between mission, relief work, and peace witness.[25] The annual report of the D.Z.V. says, "Everybody agrees that the activities of the institutions mentioned are expressions of being a Christian, signs of obedience and discipleship . . .. The one spiritual foundation of this work has to find expression in a spirit of mutual appreciation, consultation and, where possible, cooperation." A meeting on the official board level later that year led to nothing more than, "Everyone shall be boss in his own house."[26]

Ten years later L. Koopmans again pleaded emphatically for linking mission and relief organizations within the brotherhood because mission in principle is a matter of apostolate and diaconate: "In order to remove a certain rivalry and prestige which now hinders us, let us organize our 'outward' and 'inward' work so that it can be honestly presented as a common service to the world."[27] Even so we have come no further than to engage in periodic consultations concerning practical issues.

I have the strong conviction that this is insufficient. Recently the brotherhood was startled by alarming statistics about the decline in membership.[28] But concern about that fact should not deter us from asking the more important question: How do we as Mennonites express our Christian conviction as clearly as possible through proclamation, service, and nonviolent action? We will have to relate positive aspects of Mennonite congregational life with the urgency of the proclamation of the gospel in a secularized society. We need to be prepared to learn from what others here in the Netherlands and neighbors in other churches and cultures throughout the world have to offer. The undercurrent of openness is still weak; we need help.

The future: without faith the future is empty

When one attempts to speak about the future of the Mennonite brotherhood, it is helpful to examine the appraisals some have made of the Mennonite witness. "We know ourselves called, in obedience to Jesus Christ our Lord, driven by his love, to witness in our strife-torn world to him and his love as the only way to salvation," declared the Peace Group in 1953. That witness will emerge from "a life of faith and prayer and communion with the Lord, and especially by allowing his love to guide unfailingly us personally in every aspect of life, including the facing of enemies and those who do injustice or violence to us."[29] Although the matter of fellowship with each other comes later in this declaration, it does reveal a spirit opposed to narrow individualism. A few years later W. F. Golterman wrote, "Fellowship, proclamation and service belong together. The center, fellowship, reveals itself outwardly as apostolate and diaconate. I do not think it possible to say that the congregation has fulfilled its calling by concentrating on only one of these three elements."[30] Preservation of closed congregations can thus never be justified as a goal in itself!

L. Koopmans similarly stresses the unity of mission and service. He includes both in his definition: "Mission is the inclusion of the church worldwide by the Holy Spirit in God's saving actions through Christ in the world."[31] This definition recognizes that mission has to be a matter of witness in one's own country as well as abroad. Everywhere in the world congregations are called to offer their hands and feet in the service of God's act of salvation. Lastly, for J. A. Oosterbaan, "true and complete mission is: witness to the wholeness of salvation that penetrates into every aspect of life." This wholeness of salvation is then specified to be the unity of the interior salvation—namely peace with God, oneself, and one's neighbor—and exterior salvation, peace activated by love. The congregation is then "the realm of peace in Christ."[32] Earlier Frits Kuiper had declared that our biblical message is "nothing more and nothing less than a fundamental historical biblicism," and that three things are of essential importance: "First, we have to tear aside the religious mask from the face of social, political and cultural powers of society. Second, we must confirm the positive value of human life without deifying it. Third, we must carry the biblical peace witness right into the center of the world situation of our century."[33]

In the wake of these definitions I dare to make the following remarks about an open Mennonite community.

Renewal of insight in and knowledge of the Bible as our unique source of inspiration will have to become predominant with Mennonites again in order for us to realize that we as a community do have a reason to exist. Relevant Bible study must revive a faith which apparently after the period of martyrdom of the Anabaptists carried insufficient power and expression.

Mennonites have always had a strong consciousness of fellowship and a peculiar type of piety. All this is not to be cast off as useless. Indeed it must be placed in the service of an openness ready to take risks rather than be geared to self-preservation. Because Mennonites are accustomed to work in small groups and in small numbers, **they** can again stand in the forefront in a society in which the development of technology threatens to overwhelm everything else and the abundance of information confuses and depresses people. Given that situation, according to Emilio Castro, there will come into existence "more and more small groups as exhaust valves of all those tensions, as islands where life is meaningful, as a possibility for human existence."[34] Dr. Castro thus expects growth in the number of base church groups.

Mennonites will have to pay attention and listen to these groups in order to learn from them how we can become once again "open congregations." For the same reason we will have to consult Mennonite communities which practice a radical congregational life. These are communities which model the absolute opposite of "individualistic atomism." James Metzler uses the ideas of John H. Yoder when he describes such a community as follows: "Bands of pilgrims, migrating here and there, relating to each other in a way that demonstrates every aspect of the gospel, and living in a community that is open to each new seeker—this is the kind of mission which the New Testament describes and for which shalom is the sum and the substance."[35]

Sooner than in other churches, the realization can break through and take shape among Mennonites that in the Netherlands Christians are a minority—even though that fact is obscured by statistics based on the number of baptized members in churches which practice infant baptisms—within a society which more and more shows signs of disintegration. Mennonites have been a minority and had little power. In principle it must therefore be possible to approach questions about power and powerlessness out of that background and from a position not typical for the churches. Furthermore, the problem of how to give people a voice (as a part of the development process) should be tackled by Mennonites out of their experience. We also need to question whether we as a minority without power really have to participate in everything and need to have an opinion on every issue. Both the theological consideration and practical implication of this issue for diaconal and mission organizations of our brotherhood deserve high priority.

In view of the above, I want to stress the urgency of asking the assistance of Christians from other countries and cultures. We will have to examine seriously their ways of being communities, often as a minority in hostile or indifferent environments. We also need to examine their approach to theological reflection in order to be able jointly to find new ways for witness elsewhere and in our part of the world. Again, Mennonites could take a lead by the intensity of their international contacts within the Mennonite World Conference. But contacts with people out of other faith traditions and convictions can assist us in giving new impetus to our congregations.

In our generation the problem of peace among races, peoples, and nations cuts so deeply into the lives of common people that it is not possible for an "open" congregation to avoid discussion about peace. On the contrary, the church must stimulate the sharing of the message of peace within society. Closed groups are inclined to avoid differences of opinion in order to preserve harmony and peace within. In mission service in other countries the peace witness has often been weakly expressed. What Robert Ramseyer says about mission work of the North American Mennonites probably is also true for Dutch Mennonites: "Correctly or incorrectly, most Mennonite missionaries apparently did not include the peace witness as an important part of their presentation of the gospel."[36] To the extent his thesis is correct, the peace witness at home has not been an important part of the gospel message. We will have to learn how with respect for the integrity of the other person's opinion—in case we discern his conscience to be "weak" (cf. 1 Cor 8:7)—to leave our "safe" notions and give a biblical peace witness.

Both with regard to service in our own country as well as witness abroad, we as a brotherhood lack an organizational format that optimally exploits the different gifts of grace within our community. With urgency we must strive to call into being a work group which expresses the oneness of the witness: unity among Anabaptist peace witness at home, service of the word, and fraternal aid elsewhere.[37] Biblical justice, respect for the right of each human being to become all that God intended them to be, and love which allows us to treat each other as equals must always stand before us.

In conclusion, it must be said that any organization becomes a lame beast of burden if faith is lacking. "If you do not stand firm in your faith, you will not stand at all" (Is 7:9). More than twenty years after van der Zijpp closed his brochure with that word of Scripture, this exhortation remains the key to our future as Mennonite congregations.

Footnotes

[1]N. van der Zijpp, *Verloren Openheid, van doperse zendingsgemeente tot doopsgezinde beslotenheid.* Assen, 1959.

[2]Van der Zijpp, *Verloren Openheid,* 7. Het reglement van een mij bekende gemeente noemt als doel van de gemeente: "1. het Christelijk godsdeinstig leven te bevorderen van haar leden en van de Doopsgezinden, die binnen de vastgestelde grenzen der Gemeente gevestigd zijn; 2. een geestelijk tehuis te zijn voor de Doopsgezinden, die daar tijdelijk vertoeven; 3. mede te werken tot bevordering van de geestelijke belangen der Doopsgezinden in Nederland en daarbuiten." Evangelieverbreiding is in dat reglement een van de middelen tot dat doel.

[3]Ibidem, 13.

[4]H. W. Meihuizen, "De Zendingsdrift vroege Doopsgezinden" in: *Doopsgezind Jaarboekje* 1980, ziet deze verwachting van het nabije wereldeinde als de hoofdreden van de zendingsdrift van de eerste generatie dopers.

[5]Van der Zijpp, *Verloren Openheid,* 14 v.

[6]Ibidem, 18.

[7]Sjouke Voolstra ed. *Vreemdelingen en Bijwoners. Vredesgetuigenissen uit het Nederlandse Doperdom.* Amsterdam, 1979, 15.

[8]N. van der Zijpp, *Geschiedenis der Doopsgezinden in Nederland,* Arnhem, 1952, 187.

[9]Zie over deze periode: W. J. Kühler, "Dutch Mennonite Relief Work in the Seventeenth and Eighteenth Centuries," *Mennonite Quarterly Review XVII* (1943), 87-94. Voorts S. Blaupot ten Cate, *Geschiedenis der Doopsgezinden in Holland, Zeeland, Utrecht en Gelderland,* Tweede Deel, Amsterdam, 1847, 117-124; en N. van der Zijpp, *Geschiedenis,* 185-186.

[10]N. van der Zijpp, "De vroegere Doopsgezinden en de krijgsdienst" (1930), in: *Uit het* werk van Prof. Dr. N. van der Zijpp, s.l., s.a. 31. Voolstra *Vreemdelingen en bijwoners,* 47.

[11]*De kleine Medewerker. Doopsgezind Maandblad voor Uit—en Inwendige Zending.* Eerste jaargang 1889. Was bedoeld als maandblad voor de "Doopsgezinde Kinder Zendings-Vereeniging." Vanaf jaargang 13 (1911) blijkt die Kinder-Zendings Vereeniging door gebrek aan belangstelling opgeheven te zijn en verandert de titel. Na de dood van de re acteur, C.P. van Eeghen Jr. wordt de uitgave gestaakt (1917).

[12]Th. E. Jensma, *Doopsgezinde Zending in Indonesië,* 's Gravenhage, 1968, 64 vv. en C. Nydam, *De Doopsgezinde Zending,* s.l., s.a., 18, 19.

[13]Hierover: Douwe Woelinga, "Nood van en hulp aan de Mennisten van Rusland 1920-21," *Doopsgezind Jaarboekje (DJ) 1922,* 64-93; F.C. Fleischer, "Ons hulpwerk in Oekraïne en de Krim," DJ 1923, 43-73 en DJ 1924, 61-78.

[14]Ds. S.H.N. Gorter hield in 1931 zelfs een radiotoespraak over "Doopsgezinde Emigratie," waarvan de tekst in druk verscheen. In het *DJ 1931,* 64-71 rapporteert hij voorts over de Mennonitische Welt-Hilfs-Konferenz, die in sept. 1930 in Dantzig was gehouden. "Op deze samenkomst zijn zonder veel woorden oude, versleten en verscheurde banden weder vernieuwd en aangehaald en heeft men misschien sterker dan ooit gevoeld van Siberië tot Brazilië en van 17de eeuwsch rechtzinnig tot 20ste eeuwsch vrijzinnig vele leden van één lichaam te zijn." (65). De in aantekening 9 genoemde lezing van W.J. Kühler werd tijdens die conferentie gehouden.

[15]Voolstra, Vreemdelingen en bijwoners, 53.

[16]Van der Zlipp, *Verloren Openheid,* 22.

[17]A. K. Kuiper, *De Zending een Wekstem voor de Gemeente,* s.l., s.a. (± 1933), vermeldt alleen op p. 13: "De verschillende genootschappen hebben dan slechts beteekenis in *dit* opzicht, dat zij in de onderscheidene zendende gemeenten de liefde voor den zendingsarbeid beter wakker kunnen maken en houden dan wanneer er slechts één Protestantsch genootschap was." Uiteraard was de verwerping van de kinderdoop een balangrijk motief. A.Mulder, "Uit hit Verleden van de Doopsgezinde Zending," in: *Uit Heden en Verleden van de Doopsgezinde Zending,* 1947, 6-7.

[18]Th.E. Jensma, *Doopsgezinde Zending,* 151. De oude naam was te zeer door het koloniale tijdperk bepaald.

[19]ibidem, 4 noot 16.

[20]R. de Zeeuw, "Bijzondere Noden (overzicht over ruim 20 jaren)," *DJ 1970,* 72 v.

[21]The minutes of the D.Z.V. meeting September 18, 1950, mention talks about cooperation. On June 5 it had been spoken about already (without the German delegates who had visa problems). At that meeting Rev. D. Amstutz mentioned as extra reason for cooperation in the European context, the wish of the Javanese church, that Christianity should no longer be called "agama belande," religion of Dutchmen!

[22]Zie de brochures *Doopsgezinden en Ontwikkelingssamenwerking* (1971?) en *Tien jaar na Uppsala,* 10 x 2%?, 1978.

[23]A.Mulder, "Uit het Verleden van de Doopsgezinde Zending," 5-6.

[24]Notulen D.Z.V. dd. 15 october 1947. Cf. Th.E. Jensma, *Doopsgezinde Zending,* 149.

[25]*Jaarverslag Doopsgezinde Zendings Raad 1963,* 8-9.

[26]ibidem.

[27]L. Koopmans, "Enkele principiële kanttekeningen bij 125 jaar doopsgezinde zending" in: *Toen, Nu, Straks. Lezingen en impressies* door L. Laurense, A.G. Hoekema, L. Koopmans, 49.

[28]Via een rapport van de Commissie Broederschap op lange Termijn. Dat dit probleem niet nieuw is, bewijst het geschriftje van S. Blaupot ten Cate, *Gedachten over de Getalsvermindering bij de Doopsgezinden in Nederland,* Amsterdam, 1844.

[29]Geciteerd uit Voolstra, *Vreemdelingen en Bijwoners,* 57-58.

[30]W.F. Golterman, *Tot alle Volken,* Haarlem, 1959, 4.

[31]L. Koopmans, *Principiële Kanttekeningen,* 47.

[32]In een lezing "Heil für das ganze Leben" tijdens de EMEK-zendingsconferentie 1974, welke als thema had, *So sende Ich euch.* Afzonderlijk uitgegeven, 10 vv.

[33]Frits Kuiper, *Der Vorrang der Bibel in der Geschichte der Mennoniten,* Montevideo, 1966, 27-28.

[34]In een lezing tijdens het 50 jarig bestaan van de Nederlandse Zendings Raad, 1979. Te vinden in: *Wereld en Zending,* IX, 1980 nr. 1.

[35]James E. Metzler, "Shalom is the Mission" in: Robert L. Ramseyer, ed., *Mission and the Peace Witness,* Scottdale, Pa., 1979, 50.

[36]Robert L. Ramseyer, "Mennonite Mission and the Christian Peace Witness" in Ramseyer, ed., *Mission and the Peace Witness,* 117.

[37]L. Laurense thinks in that direction in a work-paper he presented in the D.Z.R. early 1980. (D.Z.R. is the Doopsgezinde Zendings Raad, similar to the Mennonite Mission Board.) My before-mentioned suggestions have been shaped also by recent discussion within the D.Z.R. and particularly through the opinions of L. Laurense and L. Koopmans, to whom thanks is due for their helpful remarks.

Dialogue or Mission or . . .?

ROBERT L. LINDSEY

Christian leaders and groups increasingly raise questions about whether believers in Jesus should speak to Jews about following the Nazarene, the man of Galilee. At stake is the question of whether the Christian mission to the Jews should be given up.

Many years ago Reinhold Niebuhr declared that missionary activities among the Jews are *wrong not only because they are futile and have little fruit. . . . They are wrong because the two faiths despite differences are sufficiently alike for the Jew to find God more easily in terms of his own religious heritage than by subjecting himself to the hazard of guilt feelings involved in conversion to a faith which, whatever its excellencies, must appear to him as a symbol of an oppressive majority culture. . . . Practically nothing can purify the symbol of Christ as the image of God in the imagination of the Jew from the taint with which ages of Christian oppression in the name of Christ have tainted it.*

Paul Tillich made similar statements. Since that time a quarter of a century ago, influential Protestant and Catholic leaders have added their voices to the protests of Neibuhr and Tillich and have moderated Christian fervor for and interest in evangelization of that part of Israel which is unwilling to consider the claims of Jesus or to follow him—the majority of the Jewish people today.

How should Christians understand the people called the Jews? How should Christians approach Jewish people?

Is the question simple?

Modern Jews and Rabbinic Judaism

Many Christian thinkers insist that traditional Christian concern for the salvation of the Jewish people be put aside. They argue that Jews adhere to rabbinic faith, as set forth in the Bible and the Talmud. Though vast numbers of modern Jews have only the most tenuous ties with rabbinic faith, these Christians take for granted that Jews normally feel strong enough ties with Jewish history to accept rabbinic Judaism as normative.

Separation between Judaism and Christianity

Second, these Christians and most contemporary Jews take for granted that to be Jewish is to be non-Christian. The Christian who chooses to become a Jew can no longer be called Christian, and the Jew who chooses to follow Jesus can no longer be called a Jew.

These assumptions are based on the late, post-biblical semantics of our era. The earliest Christians would have been shocked to be told that they were not Jewish. Even those of Gentile background who joined the Jewish-Christian synagogues were declared no longer Gentiles or pagans (1 Cor 12:1); because of their decision to follow Jesus the Messiah they were no longer "separate from the commonwealth of Israel" (Eph 2:12). Only in Romans 11 does the Apostle Paul refer to people of Gentile background as Gentiles; this usage is found in no other passage and seems to have been composed in irony.

Only the greatest efforts on the part of Chrysostom in Constantinople and other Greek Christians who feared the strength of the local synagogues and their proselyting leaders succeeded in sundering church from synagogue in the popular mind. In the fourth century in North Africa, where Christians were buried as members of a Jewish sect, Augustine counseled Christians to "cease calling yourselves Jews." Frederick M. Schweitzer has described this development in church history: *More and more insistence was made that Christians alone were heirs to the biblical promises, an inheritance which Jews had forfeited by their refusal to accept Jesus; furthermore, that his death had made them guilty of deicide; that as a people they were eternally hateful to God; that no punishment or degradation was too extreme for them; that they were given over to devil worship; that they were a plague with whom Christians should not consort; that they were pariahs for whom there could be no salvation* (1971:72).

We must not accuse those who take for granted the separation between Judaism and Christianity of in any way desiring to hallow the methods by which the two became totally separate. But we must ask whether the contrast between the semantics of the New Testament and those of the following two centuries does not give us some hint of a different assumption which might provide a basis for developing a theology for Jewish-Christian relations.

History of Antisemitism

Third, these Christian thinkers tell us that in the history of antisemitism it was largely Christians' words against the Jews which kept antisemitism alive, and that because of this "Christian" involvement in persecution of the Jews, no Christians should feel they have a moral right to speak to Jews with the intention of persuading them to acknowledge Jesus as Lord.

Without doubt Christians in the West bear an enormous load of guilt at this point, and anyone sensitive to moral concerns cannot help but wonder if this contention is true. This raises the question of collective guilt. As a Christian, how responsible am I for false ideas spread by people calling themselves Christians? How responsible am I for anti-Jewish acts perpetrated by people calling themselves Christians?

Within limits, we must acknowledge the reality of collective guilt in many social situations. But how far shall I go in beating my breast for the sins of Christians with whom I am connected only in name? Because my name is Lindsey do I have to repent of the rotten things my uncle of the same name did? Every time I write a letter to an Israeli newspaper complaining about an anti-Christian attitude or legal restriction against non-Jews, must I apologize for all

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the things people calling themselves Christians have done to the Jews throughout history?

Raising the question in this way suggests a negative answer. The same logic has been used by antisemites; the Jews killed Christ; therefore all Jews are Christ-killers. What thoughtful Christian today would blame Menachem Begin or Teddy Kollek or a chief rabbi for the primarily Sadducaic act of bringing about the Roman crucifixion of Jesus? Just a touch of paranoia is evident when modern Christians not yet forty years old go about repenting of Adolf Hitler's sins against Jews to Jews also under forty.

Rejection of Jewish Identity

In the fourth place, these Christian thinkers point out that, practically speaking, in our day Jews who become Christians automatically reject their Jewishness. Therefore the person who convinces a Jew to become a believer in Jesus is guilty of a kind of genocidal act. Being Jewish, according to this logic, is more important than knowing Jesus. Coming from a Jew who rejects Jesus, such a statement is understandable, but Christians who use it reflect a strange, distorted logic which calls into question the kind of faith they espouse.

Prior to the 1967 war I perused the literature produced by Jewish philosophers and intellectuals of the past 100 years and noted that they seem intent on exegeting the nigh universal feeling that being Jewish has lost its meaning in the modern world. I came to call this theme "the loss of Jewish meaning." This discovery—that it is difficult to determine **who** is a Jew or **what** Jews are once they claim that identity—helps to explain why so many significant movements have arisen among Jews during the past century and half: Orthodoxy, Reformism, Reconstructionism, Zionism.

Orthodoxy finds Jewish meaning in rabbinism. The Reform movements seek meaning in religious renewal based more on the earliest understanding of biblical religion. Reconstructionism looks for meaning in cultic, ethnic pluralism, in which Judaism is one religio-ethnic reality among others. Zionism seeks recognition of the Jewish people as a separate national entity.

In this light we must examine the recent emergence in the United States of a remarkable movement to found Jewish synagogues where people gather who accept Jesus as the Messiah. Now nearly seventy such congregations are scattered throughout that country as leaders work to found still another Jewish movement to bring meaning to Jewishness, this time within Christian or messianic boundaries. Should this group succeed even peripherally in maintaining that being Jewish and being Christian are not mutually exclusive, the automatic assumption that Judaism and Christianity are separate will be challenged.

Jewish and Christian fears for Jewishness

Christians often fear as deeply as Jews that somehow the word "Jew" is in danger of dying a slow, gasping death in a world community that little notices the disappearance of thousands of tribes and families, some religious and some not.

Are Abraham Heschel's words true? *The mission to the Jews is a call to individual Jews to betray the fellowship, the dignity, the sacred history of their people. Very few Christians seem to comprehend what is morally and spiritually involved in supporting such activities. We are Jews as we are men. The alternative to our existence as Jews is spiritual suicide, extinction. It is not a change into something else. Judaism has allies but no substitutes. . . .*

Father Gustave Weigel spent the last evening of his life in my study at the Jewish Theological Seminary. We opened our hearts to one another in prayer and contrition and spoke of our own deficiencies, failures, hopes. At one moment I posed the question: Is it really the will of God that there be no more Judaism in the world? Would it really be the triumph of God if the scrolls of the Torah no more be taken out of the ark and the Torah no more read in the synagogue, our ancient Hebrew prayers in which Jesus himself worshipped no more recited, the Passover Seder no more celebrated in our lives, the law of Moses no more observed in our homes? Would it really be ad majorem Dei gloriam *to have a world without Jews?*

This same emotion-packed concern for the survival of the Jewish people is much more a part of Christian tradition than Heschel seems to realize. The people who most desire that their Jewish friends come to know Jesus as Savior and Lord are the people who most ardently pray for the survival of the Jewish people. Corrie ten Boom, her family, and countless others who tried to save Jews during World War II did so because they believed their Lord intended that they do so. Some people who love Israel also believe that at the name of Jesus every Jewish knee shall bow.

Only in Christian or Muslim lands have Jews survived in significant numbers. In India, where Christians were only a tiny majority, few Jews have survived; they are considered only another tiny religio-ethnic family. In China, early Jewish communities disappeared in the absence of larger tribes or peoples who knew the name Jew from Scripture.

The meaning seems clear. Jews in post-biblical history, separated as non-Christian or non-Muslim, retained their high profile as a divinely ordained community because neither Christians nor Muslims could forget them. The Muslims named them, with Christians, *ahl el-kitah,* people of the Book. Christians saw them as the unbelieving, disobedient children of Abraham who, as the Apostle Paul says, are presently against the gospel but are nonetheless beloved because the fathers had been in covenant with God. Moreover, leaders of the Roman church more than once protected Jews from mob violence, citing the promise of Scripture that "all Israel would be saved"; thus Jews must be kept alive. Such a defense is surely sub-Christian, but it bears out the point that Christendom has a built-in concern for those who call themselves Jews. Jews have a significance for Christians which far surpasses any numerical, intellectual, or economic influence they have attained.

For nearly 200 years, evangelicals of all kinds have speculated about eschatology and the Jewish people. By far the most influential scheme developed is the premillennial view. It assumes that modern Jews are the descendants of the Jews of Jesus' time and earlier, and applies the prophecies of the Old and New Testaments to this people. Premillennialists believe the Jews are non-Christian but will, as a result of their return to the land of Israel and the desperate struggles culminating in the Battle of Armageddon, "look upon him whom they have pierced" and be

saved, becoming the redeemed community which will have the task of winning the non-Jewish world to personal allegiance to Jesus Christ who will be enthroned in Jerusalem and will rule the world for 1,000 years.

According to this view, most of these events will occur after Jesus has returned to take to heaven those who believe in him, sometimes called the "Gentile church."

Most Jews who have established Jewish-Christian congregations in the United States have been influenced by this position in some form. Indeed, according to Chaim Weizmann, first president of the state of Israel, the existence of this vision as a part of the training of Great Britain's leaders made possible the Balfour Declaration.

And, right or wrong, what other scheme could provide Jews with as dramatic and important a place as the one envisioned by these evangelical premillennialists? However disagreeable most Jews may find it, significant numbers of Christians imagine a far brighter future for them than Jews generally can even begin to imagine.

Summary of Christian attitudes toward Judaism

First View: Christian and Jewish religions are distinct

As a whole, Christians and Jews for at least sixteen centuries have thought of themselves as adherents of separate, if related, religions, and as members of separate religio-ethnic communities. Whether Christians relate to Jews primarily as evangelists or as scholars comparing religious notes with their Jewish counterparts, both Christians and Jews assume that their faiths are distinct.

Second View: Jews don't need Christian faith

A growing number of Christian theologians and scholars insist that the history of Christian-Jewish relations has been so catastrophic for Jews that the Christian church has no moral right to support evangelists who try to evangelize the Jewish people. In agreement with Jewish rabbis, they suggest that the rabbinic recension of biblical faith is "good enough for Jews," just as the Christian recension of biblical faith is "good enough for Christians" and perhaps for all non-Jews. Jews do not need Jesus.

Third View: Jews must survive

Underneath all Christian thinking about Jews is a remarkable concern that the Jewish people are too much related to God's self-revelation to go unrecognized and unappreciated in history. The Jews **must** survive to fulfill their divine role—which Christians normally see as including profession of faith in Jesus of Nazareth as Messiah and Lord. At this point the perpetual Jewish fear for survival meets the Christian desire for Jewish survival. This has important consequences, even political ones, for the Jews. In their own ways, liberal Christians and apocalyptically-minded Christians—and many in between—are dedicated to Jewish survival. Fears like those of Heschel are exaggerated if they are based on the belief that Christians seriously think God wants the disappearance of the synagogue. If Christians genuinely follow biblical modes of thought or those of Jesus himself, Jews have no reason to assume this.

Options for resolving the problem

Orthodoxy

In their somewhat frenetic search for survival, Jews have been unable to arrive at a solution that can muster a consensus among them. If survival includes hallowing rabbinic insights—including the anti-Jesus stance of the rabbis and popoular late tradition—on official and theological levels Jews must normally reject any approach of Christian witness.

Orthodoxy, in its attachment to tradition, stands frightened at the merest appearance of Jewish interest in Jesus. Reform and Reconstruction seek Jewish adjustment to Christian environment but unsuccessfully demand of non-Jews water-tight religio-ethnic compartments comparable to the Jewish entity to ensure Jewish survival. Christian drive for ecumenicity cannot easily accept this. Zionism has succeeded in creating a state which occupies Jews' attention while they seek a national redefinition of Jewishness. But even in Israel people admit that Zionism has failed to draw a plurality of the world's Jewish community to make the giant step of **aliya** or immigration.

Jews for Jesus

Thousands of young American Jews have come to the conclusion that it may be possible to be both Christian and Jewish. Why? Because no movement for Jewish "adjustment" which is also non-Christian has fully succeeded. But also because Jesus remains attractive, however faulty his followers may be.

These young people say something like this: We Jews are an enigma to ourselves. We no longer know why we should be Jewish, though we would like to be. The great modern movements which have promised Jewish survival have let us down. Let's try Jesus. He has managed to win the love and respect of nearly a billion people. And he is a Jew. He is the only way we have not tried. Why not try him?

Of course, other things are behind this "Jews for Jesus" movement: the hippy movement with its despair about war and affluence, many charismatic individuals and fellowships which welcomed Jewish young people as quickly as any other young people, the failure of all modern non-Christian Jewish movements to fill the vacuum American Jewish youth feel. Jesus **is** the light of the world, and for many a Jew the ancient word, "It is too light a thing for you to gather Israel and revive Jacob, so I will make you a light of the Gentiles," is too patently perfect a description of what Jesus has done in history not to impress in any thinking, questioning Jews today.

Building on both traditions

Another way to see this new thing is in terms of a return to the semantics of the New Testament and early church: People who identify themselves as Jews also believe in Jesus.

We are witnessing the working of the Holy Spirit in history. The God of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob who remembered his covenant with these patriarchs and delivered their descendants from slavery has again spoken, this time through his Son—as the writer of the Book of Hebrews wrote so long ago.

Not the slightest shade of triumphalism appears among people calling themselves Christians in this new development. Only when Christians abandoned all ideas of forcing conversion or conviction on Jews, and began to share love and concern for them, did Jesus reappear on the scene. Our Lord will not win by force or compulsion, and no one who acts in his name in such a way can expect his patronage or a share of his glory.

I view as distorted all attempts to bypass Jesus in a statement about the relationship between Jews and Christians. It will not do to pick some rich biblical term like covenant, or election, or chosenness, and pretend that this term suggests a way of salvation or blessing to any person, group, or fellowship, apart from the personal choice of the way God has ordained. The burden of the Bible is that only those who respond to God's provision or agency, whether in the person of Moses, an appointed prophet, the angel of the Lord, or the Messiah himself, under the conditions of time which the Almighty himself governs, have a right to expect the joy of God's acceptance and presence.

This does not mean that the ways of dialogue, mission, or witness are meaningless. My own conviction is that the world "mission" is a poor choice now in view of the semantics of our time. A missionary is sent, like Jonah, to people to have no knowledge of the God of Israel. The Jews of today are descendants of the patriarchs, with whom God made his first covenant. Like all people, including Christians, they need to be brought first into a living relationship with God and his anointed.

Of course, two-way conversation and sharing is good. The Bible has a hundred illustrations of it: Abraham getting things straight through conversation with Pharoah; Moses learning from Jethro; Joshua talking with the elders; David forgiving Bichri; and pre-eminently, Jesus in two dozen teaching conversations with friends and foes. But dialogue does not take the place of witness, sharing, or prayer for one another. It cannot, just as a lecture cannot take the place of a handshake, and a greeting in the street cannot take the place of an invitation to a meal.

The older brother

Sometimes Jews and Christians turn to the Parable of the Older Brother (the story of the Prodigal Son) to illustrate the Jewish-Christian relationship. Franz Rosenzweig incorporated it into his picture of Jews and Christians. More recently it appears in the title of Roy A. Eckardt's book, *The Elder and Younger Brothers: The Encounter of Jews and Christians* (1967).

The parable is useful even if it does not perfectly fit the subject at hand. Originally, Jesus seems to have told it to justify the outcast publicans, sinners, and prostitutes of his day. The prodigal son fit this category. He demanded independence from his father only to lose his way and come penitently to ask his father to take him back as a slave, not a son. The father, overjoyed, prepared a feast in honor of his son's return. When the merrymaking was in full progress, the father discovered the older brother had gone off by himself, refusing to join in the festivities. A dialogue ensued, and the father said, "Son, you are always with me and all I have is yours." The parable ends before we know whether the father succeeded in convincing the older brother to join the merrymaking.

Rosenzweig was intrigued by the father's words to the older brother: "You are always with me." Rosenzweig had a moment of truth once in a synagogue on Yom Kippur—at a time when he considered joining the Christian church. Suddenly it occurred to him that the Jews were indeed the older brother and that since they were already "home," already safe in the family circle, they did not need to become Christian. The Gentiles, he decided, need Christ to bring them to repentance, like the younger son. But Jews already share in the life of the father and have no need of Jesus.

Perhaps this parable can be extended to allow the younger brother to represent not only the outcasts of first-century Palestine, but the multitudes which eventually came to the God of Israel through the sub-Apostolic and post-Apostolic church. Other passages in the Synoptic Gospels suggest that Jesus looked forward to the inclusion of a people who had not sought the Lord (Is 65:1), who would "sit down with Abraham and Isaac and Jacob" at a future time. it seems exegetically sound to suppose that Jesus saw the church as the remnant of Israel expanding to include those of the Gentile world who would receive him. If this is so, Rosenzweig's interpretation of the parable is possible.

However, the application of this illustration to modern Jews and Christians does not support the theory that Jews do not need Jesus. The older brother rejected his repentant brother, and worse, refused to come to the celebration their father had arranged for the repentant one. The father tried to show his older son that he had nothing to lose in receiving his brother and that he could only gain by repenting of his unforgiving attitude and joining the feast and entering into the merriment and joy.

Jesus' choice of the word "feast" probably contains a hint of the messianic banquet often referred to in rabbinic sources. Is it possible that the older brother will forever refuse the provision of the father and will reject his call for forgiveness? Anger directed at God is not only useless, it deprives one of God's blessing and deliverance. To understand "all I have is yours" to mean that the stubborn part of Israel which refuses God's Messiah is automatically saved and in harmony with God twists the doctrine that God never stops trying to get individuals and groups to accept his ways and will. Individuals can rebel against God. Groups can refuse his loving overtures. But the consequences are tragic.

The relationship of the younger brother to the older is not an easy one. The younger can hardly urge his brother at all. After all, his own waywardness has created this unhappy situation. How can dialogue or witness do any good as long as the older brother feels injured and mistreated? All the younger son can do is accept humbly his father's unmerited favor, rejoice in it, and hope that his brother will someday get over his pique.

However tragic is the relationship between Jews and Christians today, believers in Jesus of Nazareth ought not revise their soteriology, their theology of salvation, on the basis of this brokenness and sin. Jesus is Lord and the author of our salvation. One believing section of Israel—along with all angry and unhappy sons in divine history—is inseparably related to the repentant younger son who lives in "the joy of his Lord." As Paul says so well in Romans 11, the only hope for changing Israel's mind is "through jealousy," a method only God would design.

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Home Ministries Consultation
October 21-23, Elkhart, Indiana

The need in the Mennonite Church for good home ministries workers—including church planters and leaders of emerging urban congregations was repeated over and over during the Home Ministries Consultation October 21-23 in Elkhart, Indiana.

Hosted by Mennonite Board of Missions, the annual consultation was attended by thirty-six representatives from twenty-two conferences of the Mennonite Church, along with churchwide agency staff. They were mostly mission commission chairpersons, executive secretaries, and conference ministers.

Reasons listed for a lack of good home ministries workers included failure to challenge young people to meeting the need in recent years, inadequate support and guidance for persons who **do** respond, and insufficient promotion of home ministries and training for it at Mennonite colleges and seminaries. "Poor self-image" on the part of pastors and congregations was also cited.

MBM Home Missions Interim Director Edward C. Taylor reported on meetings he has been having with conference leaders to strengthen ties between home missions pastors and their sponsoring conferences. MBM is encouraging the use of contracts which spell out clearly what is expected of the pastors and what they will receive from their conference and congregation in the way of salaries, benefits, and continuing education.

Ed also reviewed plans for a Pastoral Enrichment Center which would offer a continuing education opportunity for pastors and others who have not had much formal training. The center would emphasize practical studies in administration, counseling, preaching, and teaching, as well as basic courses in theology and Anabaptism.

A high point for many of the consultation participants was a time for sharing the work of God in home ministries. The session, which lasted nearly three hours, was a chance for each conference to report on experiences of 1980 and plans for 1981.

Ray E. Horst, MBM vice president for home ministries, moderated the three-day consultation. He called repeatedly for the streamlining of home ministries work in the Mennonite Church. He noted that each conference has its way of doing outreach and that relationships with the churchwide outreach agency—MBM—are often confusing.

"We need to remove some of the stumbling blocks from our relationships and establish clear understandings and expectations so that we can get on with our common task of witnessing for Jesus Christ," Ray said.

The conference leaders called for more frequent meetings to encourage each other and share ideas on home missions. They asked for the continuation of the annual churchwide consultation and the possible addition of annual meetings in several regions of the Mennonite Church.

Among numerous other items on the consultation schedule was a well received home ministries case study presented by Benno Barg, Gordon Erb, and Hubert and June Schwartzentruber of Ontario Conference.

During the three-day event, conference leaders were also asked by MBM President Paul M. Gingrich to respond to MBM's goals and objectives for 1980-85 and a proposed WITNESS NOW mission emphasis in the Mennonite Church for 1982-83.

At the end of the consultation, participants were asked to share their vision for future home ministries efforts in the Mennonite Church. They included ministry to refugees from Southeast Asia and international students on North American campuses, putting peace and justice concerns at the center of the Mennonite witness, reaching out to the deaf and other handicapped persons, involving Mennonite business and professional people in outreach, sponsoring alternatives to the current penal system, and continuing the enlarged urban focus both in the inner city and in suburbia.

A Pennsylvania participant cited a recent Gallup Poll which found that sixty percent of unchurched people in the USA would go to church if invited by neighbors. This prompted an Illinois representative to call for an emphasis on evangelism in "my town."

Devotions during the session were led by David W. Shenk, director of home ministries and evangelism for Eastern Mennonite Board of Missions and Charities (Salunga, Pennsylvania).

Also on the consultation agenda were the findings and recommendations of the Mennonite Church's Evangelism and Church Growth Resource Team, presented by Richard Showalter.

Reports were made by Harold Bauman of Mennonite Board of Congregational Ministries, Reuben Savanick of MBM Deaf Ministries, and José Ortiz and Dwight McFadden of the Mennonite Church General Board's Offices of Latin and Black Concerns.

Representatives of Goshen Biblical Seminary, Eastern Mennonite Seminary, and the black and Hispanic leadership programs at Goshen (Indiana) College reported on their efforts to train home ministries workers.—Steve C. Shenk

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Steve C. Shenk is a staff writer for Mennonite Board of Missions, Elkhart, Indiana.

In review

Christian Conversion in Context. By Hans Kasdorf. Scottdale, Pennsylvania: Herald Press, 1980, 217 pp., $6.95 (pb)

Reviewed by Peter M. Hamm

What calls for another book on conversion? Such a missiological treatise on conversion, written from a believers church perspective, has not been written before. Given the confusion over the subject, the easy believism of the popular "born again" cult, and the dilemma of many—not knowing what to do with their children, since they cannot replicate the radical conversion experience of their forebears—this book meets a rather urgent need both at home and abroad.

As the title indicates, *Christian Conversion in Context* looks at more than just the theological explanation or even the psychological experience of conversion. Dr. Kasdorf deliberately extends his discussion to the context in which the born-again experience happens and the Christian community to which the convert is inextricably related —or should be. The book is in four parts, the heart of which is the third. In the first two parts the author defines his terms, introduces the missiological use of the term "Fourth World," and defends the role of Christian ethnotheology. More importantly, in two further chapters he provides the biblical, exegetical background. In the "Light from the Old Testament," Kasdorf forthrightly shows humans' deviation from God's norm, and, in conversion, the turning from sin to God, even the return of a whole people. Jeremiah 8:4-6 is a key passage to illustrate the turning away and return to God. Kasdorf notes how the New Testament further unfolds the conversion concept. Romans 4:25-5:1 is the key passage to interpret justification as a divine/human interaction.

Part III treats conversion in its ethnotheological matrix. In five separate chapters Kasdorf explicates the psychological, theological, missiological, ethnoreligious, and generational concerns. In the psychological matrix Kasdorf deals with the empirical and experiential aspects of conversion, wrestling particularly with William James' understanding and adding his own explanation of "peak-experience" to James' "volitional" and "self-surrender" types. In his theological concern, which perhaps more accurately could be defined as theological/sociological, Kasdorf deals with reconciliation and relational implications of conversion, including a note on believers' baptism and a call to responsibility. In his missiological concerns, the author deals with such objectives in opposites as individual versus community, personal versus multi-personal, guilt culture versus shame culture, and quality versus quantity. All are frequently distorted notions. Here Kasdorf brings to bear his Anabaptist understanding of conversion and cautions against individualism and ethnomyopia (sociocultural nearsightedness).

In the ethnoreligious concern, he analyses Anthony Wallace's anthropological notion of revitalization. Particularly helpful for Western societies is the author's discusson of renewal and conversion in nominal Christianity. Most useful is the chapter relating to the generational concern in which Kasdorf deals with religious institutionalization. Here Max Weber's treatise on "routinization of charisma" could have helped the author. Nonetheless, he helps to understand the difference in the conversion experience of a first-generation Christian vis-à-vis the second or the fourth-generation Christian, and he stresses the need for a theology of Christian nurture. The book concludes with a portrayal of the distinctives of the believers church and deals with the new convert and church, stressing both the responsibility of the church to the convert and the convert's role within the church.

Several rather unique features mark this book. Dr. Kasdorf begins all but the last two chapters with a case story from biblical and recent history, including contemporary conversions, to introduce and illustrate his particular concern. Moreover, the book contains eight full-page diagrams to illustrate the processes of change in this divine/human encounter. Significant for such a comprehensive study of conversion, the author freely draws on sources that are both inter-disciplinary and inter-confessional. The book contains a thorough bibliography covering the various disciplines of study, and has both a Scripture reference as well as a general index.

This book warrants being read by more than professors of theological schools; it should not only be studied by pastors and missionaries, but also by parents and Christian education workers interested in the larger understanding of the context of Christian conversion.

Peter M. Hamm is Associate Secretary for Asia, Africa, and Europe with Mennonite Brethren Missions and Services, Winnipeg, Manitoba.

Marxism: An American Christian Perspective. By Arthur F. McGovern. Maryknoll, New York: Orbis Books, 1980, 339 pp., $12.95 (pb)

Reviewed by John H. Redekop

Among the growing body of literature dealing with Marxism and Christianity, McGovern's volume stands out as one of the most impressive. In nine well-organized chapters the author provides cogent and coherent analysis of a complex relationship, both in theory and practice. The chapter headings indicate the general scope: "Marx: the Evolution of His Ideas"; "Marxism: Its Development Since Marx"; "The Church: From Anathemas to Christian Marxists"; "The Case Against Capitalism"; "Liberation Theology in Latin America"; "Chile under Allende and Christians for Socialism"; "Atheism and Materialism"; "Property, Violence, Class Struggle, Democracy"; and "Personal Reflections: Marxism, Socialism, the United States."

Aside from being a thorough and penetrating study, the book incorporates certain particular strengths. For example, by and large the author asks the right questions: What is Marxism? Who decides what Marxism is? Are Marxism and Christianity compatible? Are atheism and materialism essential to Marxism? The complete list would be long. The detailed, carefully reasoned responses to these questions are informative and thought-provoking.

McGovern also provides numerous excellent definitions, often set in historical perspecitve to enhance clarity. However, the definition of socialism as any "economic system which advocates public ownership of property" (p. 3), particularly in light of the later assertion that "welfare is not a product of socialism but of capitalism" (p. 320), is inadequate. For centuries socialists have stressed a dual theme: public ownership of the major structures of production and distribution, and the welfare state.

The excellent criticisms of Marxist theory, both orthodox and reformed, constitute another salient feature. Here, as elsewhere, the writer reflects an impressive mastery of his subject.

The treatment of developments in Latin America, though perhaps disproportionately extensive, constitutes an exceptionally thorough diagnosis and critique. North American Christians can gain a clear picture of both the Allende phenomenon and the various dimensions of Liberation Theology.

The various scholarly aids—well placed chapter divisions and further subheadings, full documentation, an index of names and one of the subjects, and the detailed table of contents—further enhance the volume's utility.

The most significant section is Chapter 4, "The Case Against Capitalism." Aside from the fact that it is exceptionally thorough and thoroughly disturbing, for most readers it must surely set aside once and for all the notion that the antidote for materialist, atheistic Marxism is a materialist, profit-worshiping capitalism!

My criticisms of this significant work of scholarship are relatively minor. Though the author seems to be much impressed by the positive contributions of Marxist analysis, be it of "critical Marxism" or of "the dominant Marxist tradition," it seems to me that these contributions are not uniquely Marxist! Further, on rare occasions McGovern seems to reflect some naivete. Thus he seems to wonder why Polish Catholicism "stands steadfast in its resistance" to Marxism while in Mexico "Many within the church . . . espouse Marxist analysis and strategies as the only solution." His own partial response is enlightening; but surely a crucial fact is that in Poland the Marxists are in power and in Mexico they are not! Similarly, the broad assertion (p. 164) that "Union struggles, moreover, have shown that owners under pressure have the resources with which to pay higher wages" is too sweeping. Further, it may be my misunderstanding or the author's naivete, but I have trouble with the following statements (p. 261): "But even in practice, among ordinary citizens of communist countries, it would be hard to show that respect for human dignity has been lost . . .. One might indeed argue that the very values embodied in Marxist socialism come out of the Judaic-Christian tradition."

My major criticism, however, derives from what strikes me as an important omission. Granted, in one place (p. 294) McGovern refers to Marx's overestimation of "the capacity of socialist economy to eliminate conflicts and to change human nature," but he makes much too little of the fundamental problem of human selfishness, the propensity to exploitation under any political or economic structure, and the whole Marxist-socialist fallacy that social structures rather than human nature lie at the heart of the problem of exploitation and suppression.

Additionally some biases should be noted. Obviously the author gives a much fuller treatment of the Catholic than of the Protestant component of Christianity, which he fully acknowledges. Some readers may detect a prosocialist bias; but, if it exists, it is not problematic. The author has worked hard at trying to be fair. As a Catholic he sometimes may bend a little too far in trying to be fair to Marxists. Finally, though the author ranges far and wide in his analysis, his perspective is clearly American.

Though the book is "addressed primarily to Christians who want to understand Marxism," it is not an elementary treatment of the topic. This volume is not for the uninitiated; it assumes considerable familiarity with history, Christianity, and politics.

The author's personal conclusions are noteworthy: *Many U.S. Christians, I suspect, wrestle with the same feelings I find in myself; troubled about massive poverty in the world and a vast number of social problems in this country; feeling guilty about living in relative affluence and about lack of greater political involvement, yet already pressed down by work and unsure where best to expend energy; convinced that significant and perhaps very radical social change is needed, but cautious when radical solutions are proposed* (p. 309).

And again, "the Marxist socialist critique has convinced me that monopoly capitalism undermines democracy and too often does not promote the common good; hence simply to stay with what we have is for me un-Christian" (p. 321).

In sum, I strongly recommend this book for a wide readership. It is fascinating and fair, penetrating and persuasive, and both refreshing and remarkable.

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Marx and Teilhard: Two Ways to the New Humanity. By Richard Lischer. Maryknoll, New York: Orbis Books, 1979, 161 pp., $6.95 (pb)

Reviewed by Vernon Ratzlaff

One of the enduring problems is that of "the one and the many." Is reality made up of many elements or of one irreducible entity? In a world of (apparent) change, what remains constant? While the majority viewpoint of Western debate—that reality consists in that which does not change—prevailed through the impact of the Atomists, Socrates, and the empirical traditions of Europe, a minority report was also drafted. But Heraclitus (believing that change is the only unchanging entity and therefore ultimate reality) and his followers remained dormant until their thoughts were resurrected in the nineteenth century at the hands of Hegel, who (in Kierkegaard's caustic comment) built philosophers' castles but lived in hovels beside them. Hegel attempted a new synthesis of thought that would provide a schema common to questions of politics, science, and religion. His contemporaries, through process philosophy and theology, continue in that tradition.

Central to Hegel is the normativeness of change, that history leads to continuing resolutions of opposing movements. This raises the question of the normativeness of any given point along the way (since there is order in this unfolding, can we stand in judgment on any specific instance?). And since all things are changing as directed by the inner dialectic, is there need for personal intervention in history?

Hegel's disciples quickly separated into two on this question: the conservatives who accepted the normativeness (the "rightness") of any given situation as leading to the next stage of resolution, and the radicals who attempted by personal activity to hasten the coming of the next resolution (or synthesis).

Lischer summarizes the thought of two people whose thinking represents both persuasions: Karl Marx, nineteenth century social theorist who accepted Hegel's dialectic but substituted empirical description and material metaphysics for Hegel's "spirit" as driving force, and Teilhard de Chardin, twentieth century palaeontologist and Jesuit who accepted the conservative interpretation of Hegel.

Lischer treats the systems of both thinkers, attempting to identify the intersection of key points of their systems with Christian-

ity. The interpretation would have been clarified if it was prefaced by a brief examination of assumption—their acceptance of the Heraclitian-Hegelian metaphysics that better identifies them in Western thought. While Lischer concentrates on presentation of their systems, demonstrating common features, he does on occasion draw attention to a perceived shortfall such as Marx's view of religion as "the opium of the people" (p. **a la** Chardin does not take seriously enough the personal nature of sin (pp. 70,71). But overall emphasis is on presentation, rather than on dialogue from his own position.

Although this is a good comparison and presentation of the thinking of Marx and de Chardin, a more sustained critique and a summary chapter would make the book of more interest in current dialogue.

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Readings in Dynamic Indigeneity. Edited by Charles H. Kraft and Tom N. Wisley. Pasadena: William Carey Library, 1979, 548 pp., $12.95 (pb)

Reviewed by Robert L. Ramseyer

Readings in Dynamic Indigeneity is divided into four sections. Section one, "Structural Indigeneity: Theory," contains classic articles by Hodges, Beyerhaus, Smalley, Tippett, and Kraft, plus a survey article by Hans Kasdorf. Section two, "Structural Indigeneity: Applications," is made up of previously unpublished papers by Kraft and his students. Sections three and four, "Theological Indigeneity: Theory and Applications," contain articles by Kraft, Padilla, Devadutt, von Allman, Boyd, Taber, Tippett, Covell, Dye, Mbiti, Kato, and Sundkler, most of which have been published previously elsewhere.

This collection serves two basic purposes. It provides a vehicle for the restatement of Kraft's theory of indigeneity, and it makes available in one volume some of the best writing on the subject.

Charles Kraft believes that an indigenous church should perform in its own cultural setting the equivalent of the functions that New Testament churches performed in their societies. This is a valuable insight, and Kraft, using linguistic analogies, states it well. Unfortunately, Kraft's attempt to spell this out concretely is fatally flawed by his reliance on an inadequate anthropology and theology, a weakness much more apparent in his more recent (in terms of the time of writing) *Christianity in Culture* (Orbis, 1979).

Kraft differentiates clearly among form, function, and meaning in culture, treating these as if they were real entities rather than merely analytical constructs in the mind of the anthropoligist. In human language, form, function, and meaning are essentially independent, with no necessary connection between the form of a word or sentence and its meaning. Perhaps because his training is in linguistics, Kraft does not seem to realize that this is not necessarily true in other areas of culture. To take a crude example, while there may be a wide variety of forms of cutting instruments, a marshmallow cannot function as a cutting instrument in any cultural context. Kraft suggests that among the Higi in Nigeria a requirement that church leaders belong to a royal social class is only a matter of "form." However, it seems highly unlikely that such a requirement could result in a church in which leaders are genuine servants in a fellowship which understands itself to be the body of Christ who gave up his life on the cross as a suffering servant.

Theologically Kraft believes that what God wants to say to human beings does not change. Bringing this anthropology and theology together, Kraft arrives at the conclusion that God's different approaches to human beings throughout the course of history have been merely his own adaptations to the changing human cultural setting. Thus, for example, the shift from tribal and clan membership for God's people to the church which is open to all and must be joined voluntarily on the basis of faith rather than biology is God's adaptation to a nontribal society. In a present day tribal society it would be quite legitimate for God's people to be formed on a nonvoluntary biological basis. Jesus himself is another example of God's adaptation, only normative for us in so far as our cultural setting is like his.

In sharp contrast to Kraft, "The Contextualization of the Gospel" by Rene Padilla is among the best articles in the book and would alone justify its purchase. Three brief quotations give the thrust of the paper.

> *To contextualize the Gospel is so to translate it that the lordship of Jesus Christ is not an abstract principle or a mere doctrine, but the determining factor of life in all its dimensions and the basic criterion in relation to which all the cultural values that form the very substance of human life are evaluated. Without contextualization the Gospel will go on a tangent or even be irrevelant* (p. 295).
>
> *The role of theology is to interpret and clarify God's Word for the sake of obedience to Christ in the concrete historical situation* (p. 305).
>
> *In practical terms this means that the totality of life (including patterns of thinking and conduct, values, habits, and roles) must be allowed to be judged by the Word of God, so that only what is honoring to Christ remains and is fulfilled. Dying with Christ we die to our own culture and are therefore able to recognize with greater objectivity the ways in which we are conditioned by it as well as to appreciate the values in any culture other than our own . . . . The truly indigenous Church is the one that through death and resurrection with Christ embodies the Gospel within its own culture"* (p. 307).

Where some see indigeneity in terms of how little one can change and still be Christian, Padilla stresses contextualization so that we can be as faithful as possible in our own cultural settings. The contrast is illustrated graphically in the introductory comment by the editors that Padilla is dealing with the question, "Just how much heresy can be tolerated?" (p. 256), whereas Padilla is actually dealing with the achievement of maximum faithfulness in any specific cultural setting.

In spite of Kraft's weaknesses and an incredibly poor job of proofreading (many references in the articles will not be found in any bibliography in the book), this is a volume well worth having. Those of us who are trying to understand the relationship between the church and its human cultural setting can be grateful to Kraft and Wisley for having put this book together.

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Classics of Christian Missions. Edited by Francis M. DuBose. Nashville: Broadman Press, 1979, 463 pp., $10.50 (pb)

Reviewed by Arnie Neufeld

As suggested by the title, *Classics of Christian Missions* contains a collection of important articles and materials related to the mission and experience of the Christian church. The articles, covering a wide range of topics and issues, are designed "to provide in a single volume an introduction to the classics of Christian missions."

The general format of the volume is topical, covering mission literature in eleven categories. Within each section the essays are arranged chronologically. The list of authors includes early church fathers such as Irenaeus, Clement, and Tertullian. It also features twentieth-century writers such as Karl Barth, Kenneth LaTourette, John R. Mott, and Hendrik Kraemer. The editor has included biblical studies, histories, biographies, journals, diaries, letters, tracts, sermons, findings of historic mission conferences, and definitive studies in mission philosophy.

The historical sections are of particular value. The writings of the earlier church leaders provide illuminating insights into the life, faith, and experiences of the church in another age. The biographies, letters, journals, and other personal documents allow the reader the privilege of firsthand acquaintances with the pioneers in early mission history.

A special feature of the book is the eighteen-page bibliography given at the end of the volume. The list of English language sources will be a helpful guide to the student of mission history.

An obvious weakness, recognized by the editor, is the fact that valuable essays have been abbreviated due to restrictions of space and cost. The opportunity to become familiar with the classics will, hopefully, result in attempts to locate the unabridged volumes and then study the texts in their original length.

Classics of Christian Missions will prove to be a great asset to anyone desiring to know more about the experience and mission of the church. Pastors, instructors, students, and lay people alike will derive great benefit from this collection of important primary mission materials.

Arnie Neufeld is registrar and an instructor at Winkler (Manitoba) Bible Institute.

African Widows. By Michael C. Kirwen. Maryknoll, New York: Orbis Books, 1979, 253 pp., $8.95 (pb)

Reviewed by David A. Shank

The African custom of the levirate, by which a man substitutes for his dead brother as a proxy husband and father, is studied in this volume under the social and moral theme of "the care of widows" rather than that of polygamous marriage where it has usually been discussed by Westerners. The study grew out of a 1969 response by forty-five East African Christian (presumably Roman Catholic) leaders who were questioned about the most pressing pastoral problems. Marriage problems, they replied, could lead in many parishes to the excommunication of every baptized person sometime during his or her lifetime. The non-respect for the Catholic prohibition of the levirate was one important cause of the censure.

Father Kirwen, a Maryknoll missionary to Tanzania, proceded in his study by "developing an analysis and critique of the present-day situation of the African levirate custom vis-à-vis its prohibition by the Catholic Church." The context studied was that of four traditional societies in northern Tanzania: the Luo, the Kuria, the Kwaya, and the Sukuma. The method was that of a sociological survey in 1971-72 among 1350 African adults and 115 Catholic leaders, both African and foreign missionaries.

The first and most important part of the book gives the results of that study, processed in the light of anthropological models. A second part looks briefly at the cultural presuppositions of the Western church's negative judgment of the levirate custom, in the light of Vatican II's accent on cultural adaptation and the missionary principle of incarnation. Finally, the author gives a reassessment of the Christian prohibition of the custom, suggesting that it is more because of Western misunderstanding of lineage marriage than of true theological conflicts.

The study shows clearly that the four societies had different models for caring for their widows, and those differences led to dissimilar appreciations of Western Christian understandings, including the prohibition of the leviratic custom. For example, the traditional matrilineal structure of the Kwaya made it quite easy for a widow to remarry without obtaining a divorce from her husband's lineage. There was thus much less disapproval of the prohibition of the levirate among the Kwaya interviewed, despite Catholic teaching against matrilineality which had artificially created the levirate among them. Most important, the study revealed that among the people questioned, the leviratic union was not perceived as a marriage—and expression of polygyny—but a continuation of a previous marriage through a proxy husband. Death does not release the widow from the marriage covenant; it only changes the way in which the deceased husband and his lineage relates to her. For Father Kirwen, then, the whole situation must be perceived in a completely different moral context than that generally recognized by foreign missionary understandings.

The author insists that he does not pretend to create a new theology of marriage for Africans, since that is a job for the Africans themselves. He does, however, provide raw materials for Westerners to be open to that task of the Africans, which will no doubt be stimulated by such a study. Among those raw materials is a good description of the pre-Vatican II "manualist" teachings on marriage and sexuality. Lacking is the biblical teaching about the levirate and marriage, with Christological and pneumatological transformations of Jewish models. In other words, the hardest work is still to be done by African leaders in dialogue with the Scriptural canon and its evolving social context, as compared to pre-Vatican II "manualist" (and non-incarnate) models of marriage.

The study is of deep interest to Mennonite missiologists because Mennonite Christians also represent over five percent of the total population involved in the study and twelve percent of the Luo population.

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The Way of the Cross—Way of Justice. By Leonardo Boff. Maryknoll, New York: Orbis Books, 1980, 128 pp., $4.95 (pb)

Reviewed by Daniel S. Schipani

This is one of the latest books by Leonardo Boff, Brazilian Franciscan priest and theologian, translated from the Portuguese by John Drury. Boff is a well known Latin American author whose thinking has concentrated on a systematic Christological study from the perspective of liberation (*Jesus Christ Liberator,* Maryknoll: Orbis Books, 1979, is Boff's best known book in English).

The uniqueness of this volume lies in the fact that Boff presents a different format for his Christological reflection. In his own words, *Way of the Cross—Way of Justice* is meant to be a "prayerful theology or a theological prayer." The book consists of a set of meditations arranged in terms of fifteen "stations," from "Jesus is condemned to death" to "Jesus is raised up to life in all its fullness." A good selection of photographs —one for each station—adds impact and beauty to the presentation.

There is a structure for the meditations in each station. A historical reference to Jesus appears in the first part. This is the way of the cross **then.** In the second part, Boff reflects on the way of justice **now,** "focusing on the Christ of faith who continues his passion today in his brothers and sisters who are being condemned, tortured, and killed for the cause of justice." (p. viii).

In typical Catholic fashion, Boff includes the tradition of the Jerusalem church (sixth station: "Veronica wipes the face of Jesus"; seventh station: "Jesus falls the second time"; ninth station: "Jesus falls the third time"). In some of the references to Mary (fourth station especially), Protestant readers will be bothered by the suggestion that the mother of Jesus somehow participates in the generation of a redeemed life, the creation of a world where no one will any longer have to be crucified, and her present inspiration and support for the oppressed and for those who struggle in the search for justice.

Boff firmly believes that the ultimate criterion determining the truth of theology is whether it produces a life of faith, hope, and charity. Theology is true insofar as it is translated into meditation, prayer, conversion, the following of Christ, and commitment to our fellow human beings (p. vii). He also sees theology as having two eyes: one looks back towards the past, where salvation broke in; the other looks towards the present, where salvation becomes reality here and now (p. viii). *Way of the Cross—Way of Justice* is a good example of Boff's theological perspective. The book indeed has a powerful message: a vivid, poetic, basically faithful creed, an emphatic prophetic denunciation, and—above all—an inspiring, consistent affirmation of the Christian hope with a focus on the motif of the kingdom of God.

The main problem with that message, as with much of Liberation Theology, is this: Justice is not done to the distinctiveness of Jesus' way of the cross (and the messianic character and mission of the church). Boff affirms that the passion of the mystical Christ, embodied in the lives of those who are sacrificed for the cause of justice, preserves the same structure as the passion of the historical Jesus. The uniqueness of the Christian calling, the vision, and the strategy, in light of the person and teaching of Jesus, is missing. Thus, a sound integration between "cross" and "justice" becomes difficult or even impossible.

The Christology of liberation, including this "prayerful theology" and "theological prayer" needs and can be corrected in terms of a more careful interpretation of Scripture and a better understanding of the nature and mission of the church.

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Religious Life and the Poor: Liberation Theology Perspectives. By Alejandro Cussianovich, S. D. B. Maryknoll, New York: Orbis Books, 1979, 168 pp., $6.95 (pb)

Reviewed by C. Hugo Zorrilla

This book is written from a ministry among the most dispossessed and oppressed classes of Latin America. It is a translation by John Drury from the original work published in Lima (1975) and Salamanca, Spain (1977).

Alejandro Cussianovich impresses in his work the profound concern of following Christ within the historic concretion of the poor with whom he works and lives. The book reflects the ministerial life of its Peruvian author, and at the same time, his commitment to the poor and to the community life. As a Catholic belonging to the Salesian Order, his interests are directed toward men and women of religious orders. He dialogues with the Liberation Theology movement in the framework of the church's task after Medellin in 1968 and before Puebla in 1979.

The book has six chapters: "The Poor As a Starting Point," where he establishes that the religious leaders were the first to raise their voices in the presence of the injustices committed against the Indians; "Approaches to the Religious Life," an apostolic way of life viewed from the oppressed; "Latin American Reflection on the Religious Life," concreted after Vatican Council II and the analysis and interpretation of CELAM II, Medellin; "A Life Dedicated to the Poor of the Land," where the author is more suggestive as he shows that in an exploited and marginated continent the principal sign of the times is Christ, "the poor person" and also "the chief liberator"; and "The Liberation Project and the Project of the Religious Life," emphasizing the relation between justice and holiness, which is the kingdom of God. Cassianovich concludes that there is no salvation outside the circle of human love.

This work points out that liberation implies the social and the political aspects within the dynamics of the kingdom of God. However, the book is not sufficiently critical of the church as an institution that has from times past identified with the oppressor and has blessed the weapons of those who oppress the poor. Nor does it indicate (for obvious reasons) those of religious orders who are committed to the poor and who in many occasions are opposed by the ecclesiastical authorities that support the governments. This is a competent book for study in missionary orientation classes.

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Think China. By Alan F. Gates. Pasadena: William Carey Library, 1979, 103 pp., $6.95 (pb)

Reviewed by Jonathan H. Bartel

China is the topic of conversations, of books, and of magazine articles, including flight magazines of airlines. Still China raises many questions in the minds of all, questions pertaining to politics, commerce, and religion. Alan F. Gates in his book, *Think China,* has given us a well written book which will help readers understand the Chinese situation better.

Gates has done a scholarly job of research, and his experience as a missionary among the Chinese has given him firsthand data and impressions which have helped him to evaluate the situation in China clearly. The well researched historical background he gives helps the readers understand the present China and formulate correct attitudes towards the Chinese. The history of missions in China in Chapter 4 is a great help for Christians in the Western world. Of particular importance is the section on "Qualities of China's Church" (p. 55).

Chapter 7 needs careful study and consideration in view of the possibility of people entering China for service. The big question for the church outside of China is, "How can we help the church in China?" No one really knows the size of the church in China today, but Gates has probably underestimated when he writes of "one billion people, 99% of whom know little or nothing about the life, death, resurrection and promised coming of our Savior." Regardless of the size, the church in China today is very much alive and has much to teach us. Let us humbly learn while we endeavor to be a help.

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Black Theology: A Documentary History, 1966-79. By Gayroud S. Wilmore and James H. Cone. Maryknoll, New York: Orbis Books, 1979, 657 pp., $12.95 (pb)

Reviewed by J. R. Burkholder

In July 1966 a group of black clergy meeting in Harlem produced a document that marked a turning point in the self-understanding of Black Christianity in America. Entitled simply "Black Power," the statement took a positive approach to that controversial slogan which had emerged in the militant wing of the civil rights movement and had been criticized by Martin Luther King, Jr. The work of this ad hoc committee (to become known as the National Conference of Black Churchmen) represented the beginning of a new phase of religious reflection on the racial situation in America, independent of the models of theology and ethics that had been shaped by generations of white thinkers.

The document is "No. 1" in this comprehensive and authoritative collection of primary sources on "Black Theology"—the major theological development of the 1970s in North America. The editors, both of whom have been intimately involved in the unfolding of this story as participants and interpreters, set themselves a three-fold task in creating this significant volume. First, they have collected the major statements from black churches and church-related movements—the institutional bases for the development of Black Theology. Second, they present the substance of Black Theology through a selection of key writings, concentrating on journal articles and speeches, rather than the more readily accessible books. Third, they offer critical commentary from their perspective as participants in the movement.

Cone and Wilmore do not attempt to synthesize their eight introductory essays; each writes in his own style and from his own experience. Indeed, they call attention to this biographical and experiential approach as characteristic of black religion and Black Theology; it is testimony rather than abstract analysis.

Parts I and II, introduced by Wilmore, deal with the foundational 1966-1970 period when blacks moved beyond civil rights through the early efforts to distinguish Black Christianity from the theology and life of white churches. The year 1969 was a watershed, marked by the "Black Manifesto" (prepared by the National Black Economic Development Conference and proclaimed vigorously by James Forman) and the appearance of James Cone's *Black Theology and Black Power,* signaling a self-conscious and distinctive new interpretation.

The response of representative white theologians (including Paul Lehmann, John C. Bennett, and Paul Holmer) makes up Part III, with a preface by Cone. David Bosch's essay on South African Black Theology should be of particular interest to **Mission Focus** readers.

In Part IV, Wilmore introduces a spectrum of statements from black church bodies, ranging from the negative appraisal of Black Theology by the National Baptist Convention, U.S.A., Inc., to the Black Christian Nationalism of Albert Cleage.

Cone frankly acknowledges the problems of sexism in black churches in his introduction to Part V, "Black Theology and Black Women." Nevertheless, this section contains some of the most poignant and powerful writing in the book.

The global dimension focuses Part VI, with more than a dozen documents treating the interaction of Black Theology with African, Asian, Latin, and Marxist thought. Cone's preface traces his own travels and encounters beyond the USA and his efforts at dialogue and team teaching with representatives of various liberation theologies.

In his epilogue Cone discusses the debate among black theologians, dealing with such key themes as liberation, reconciliation, violence, spirituality, politics, and the interpretation of suffering. This essay in itself capsules the value of the book—introduction and analysis of the major contributions to Black Theology, with insight into the possibilities and problems of the movement.

For readers of **Mission Focus,** this book will be especially useful for placing the North American form of Liberation Theology in its global context. In addition to Part VI, references to Africa, Asia, and Latin America are found throughout the book (easily located by a thorough index). Vaughn Eason's annotated bibliography of some 150 items further enhances the value of the book.

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Kingdom Living Here and Now. By John MacArthur, Jr. Chicago: Moody Press, 1980, 191 pp., $8.95

Reviewed by John W. Miller

John MacArthur, Jr., preaches and teaches at Grace Community Church in Sun Valley, California, where he recently gave a series of sermons on the Beatitudes (Mt 5:1-12). The results were so significant ("more self-examination, commitment, and conversion of the lost than any other series") that he decided to publish them in *Kingdom Living Here and Now.*

The book begins with an introduction to the Beatitudes where MacArthur states that its purpose is not to be just another commentary, but a call to serious self-reflection in their light. Each of the eight Beatitudes is then given at least a chapter (the final one has two), and the book closes with a call to commitment based on "five warning passages" in the book of Hebrews.

The strength of this book is its urgent, revivalistic tone. The author believes that the church today is again being invaded by "easy believism" (cheap grace). The Beatitudes of Jesus show us a better way.

The book's scholarship, however, is weak and misleading at points. He calls the Sadducees liberals, for example (they were actually highly conservative); the Essenes were "mystics" (their scriptural nomism is proverbial); and the Zealots were more concerned about politics, he says, than religion (their zealotism was grounded in their religion). The Pharisees are uniformly portrayed in the darkest of hues. They were smug, "thought they had every right to fight Rome," "spouted" theology, and stepped on people's necks. The Jews generally are described as "merciless as the Romans," proud, egotistical, self-righteous, and condemning.

From the number of quotes I suspect that MacArthur's major commentary resource was Barclay, *The Gospel of Matthew,* Vol. I. Those who might benefit from this book (the lukewarm) likely won't read it. Those who want a guide to the Beatitudes would be better served by doing what apparently the author did: study Barclay.

John W. Miller is an associate professor and acting dean at Conrad Grebel College, Waterloo, Ontario.

Reader response

Dear Friends:

Please continue our subscription to MISSION FOCUS. I find real intellectual challenge from it, more so than from any other denominational publication. Marlin Jeschke's "A Christian Approach to Marxism" (September 1980) really clarified the core of Marx's thinking for me and gave me new rest with continuing to work with the "limited incursion of the eschaton" in the church.

I want MISSION FOCUS to continue because it is the one place I find theoretical support for continuing to value evangelization. Something has happened to me and my fellow believers in the last twenty years. I do not feel the same urge to call the world to Christ I once did—and we all did. Somehow our culturalization through the educational process has blunted that zeal; I think it's because it's intellectually difficult to believe we are the only people on earth with a corner on ultimate truth. I personally need some reworking of the theoretical foundation for mission. MISSION FOCUS is almost the only place I find that within our church.

Thank you.

Duane Diller
Portland, Oregon

Editorial comment

Thank you, Duane, for your gracious letter. We would be glad to hear from more MISSION FOCUS readers who carry the kinds of concerns you do for evangelization as a priority of the church and the need to rework our understanding of mission.

As I have reflected on these two issues, I have identified several elements of "loss" and several "gains" as we consider evangelization today.

Loss of nerve. Rival ideologies have put on a daunting performance during the past generation. At the same time the church in the West has been in decline as a cultural and spiritual force notwithstanding recent efforts by some to marshal a Moral Majority which would wield political power.

Loss of conviction. We speak easily about the various pluralisms which characterize our culture today. Simple human decency demands that we respect the tastes, values, traditions, and faith commitments of other peoples. One suspects, however, that pluralism has robbed us of our conviction concerning the uniqueness of Jesus Christ as Savior and Lord. We cease to evangelize when we are no longer convinced of the validity of the message.

Loss of message. I have just read a survey report from Brazil which contrasts the "success" of Baptists and Assemblies of God churches in evangelizing a certain region of that country. The Baptist forms of church life, the report points out, emerged in North America as people moved across the continent. It was the church of the people and took on forms suited to the tastes of that particular generation in that culture. Somehow those forms which have been transported wholesale to Brazil are out of tune with Brazilian tastes and expectations. By contrast, the Assemblies of God have sponsored a movement that allowed forms of worship and piety to evolve out of the life of the people with leadership drawn from each local assembly. They have touched ten times as many people. The point is that we may lose a hearing for our message if we do not take seriously our audience in its context. After a while we wrongly conclude that no one is interested in the gospel. It seems to be a message not worth sharing. The problem is that it was never heard in the first place.

But I see some encouraging signs of recovery.

A renewed sense of eschatology. The frightened apocalyptic mood in the world of the 1980s should stimulate Christians to express their hope with conviction and clarity.

The renewing work of the Holy Spirit. Some of the most impressive responses to the gospel today are in situations where political oppression is greatest but people are being drawn into the movement of the Holy Spirit as that which brings meaning and wholeness to life.

Renewed commitment to the kingdom. We have a growing understanding of the importance of acknowledging God's reign. We face many temptations to idolize the gods of this world; but I take courage as I observe an increased commitment to affirm with the early Christians the lordship of Jesus Christ.

I agree wholeheartedly with you that we need to rework our theory of mission. In one important sense that is a task which is never finished. It may be instructive to quickly recall some of the highlights in the development of mission theory over the past several centuries—testimony to the fact it can never remain static.

Beginning in the seventeenth century Protestants evolved the "Three C's" theory of mission. This was the dominant theory until the nineteenth century. According to this theory Christianity had to be accompanied by civilization, and eventually commerce was added. Proclamation of the gospel, according to this theory, was no simple matter. Mission involved the creation of a Christian civilization as a supporting structure.

In 1845 the American missionary statesman, Rufus Anderson, enunciated his "Theory of Mission to the Heathen" which sharply rejected the "Three C's" theory. Anderson insisted that the task of missions is spiritual and that all other considerations—though important—are secondary.

Anderson's theory laid the groundwork for what we have known as the "indigenous church" theory. An indigenous church was one which had become self-propagating, self-governing, and self-financing. Both theorists and practitioners wrestled long and hard with how to achieve this result.

Today the key word is "contextualization." This theory emphasizes the importance of starting where people are, with their questions and hurts. Forms of expression of the faith ought to grow out of the soil as the fruit of the gospel seed taking root in a particular cultural environment. But we are still left with many unanswered questions as to how this really happens and the role of the missionary as outsider in this process.

I am comfortable with this emphasis on context when it is based on the incarnation of Jesus Christ. Contextualization does not guarantee acceptance of the gospel. If the gospel becomes truly contextualized we must face the possibility it will be rejected just as readily as our Lord was rejected by influential groups in his day. But such rejection is then directed at the true "stone of stumbling" and not merely our human foibles. —Cordially, Wilbert R. Shenk

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